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46977

SONIC

THE FUGITIVE

ENDGAME
PART 2 OF 4

THE
HUNT
IS ON!



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Years ago, most of the young residents of **Planet Mobius** were forced into war, defending themselves against the conspiracy of **Julian**, former **Barlord** of the **Kingdom of Acorn**. Most notable of these "Freedom fighters" is a team led by the King's own daughter, and championed by the swiftest hero in the land. While their past efforts have been valiant, they have been a far cry from the total defeat of the rechristened **Dr. Robotnik**.

When their former ~~sire~~ staged a miraculous return to health, fortune seemed to shine on our stalwart heroes. The glistening hope of more experienced **leadership** paved the way for potential salvation.

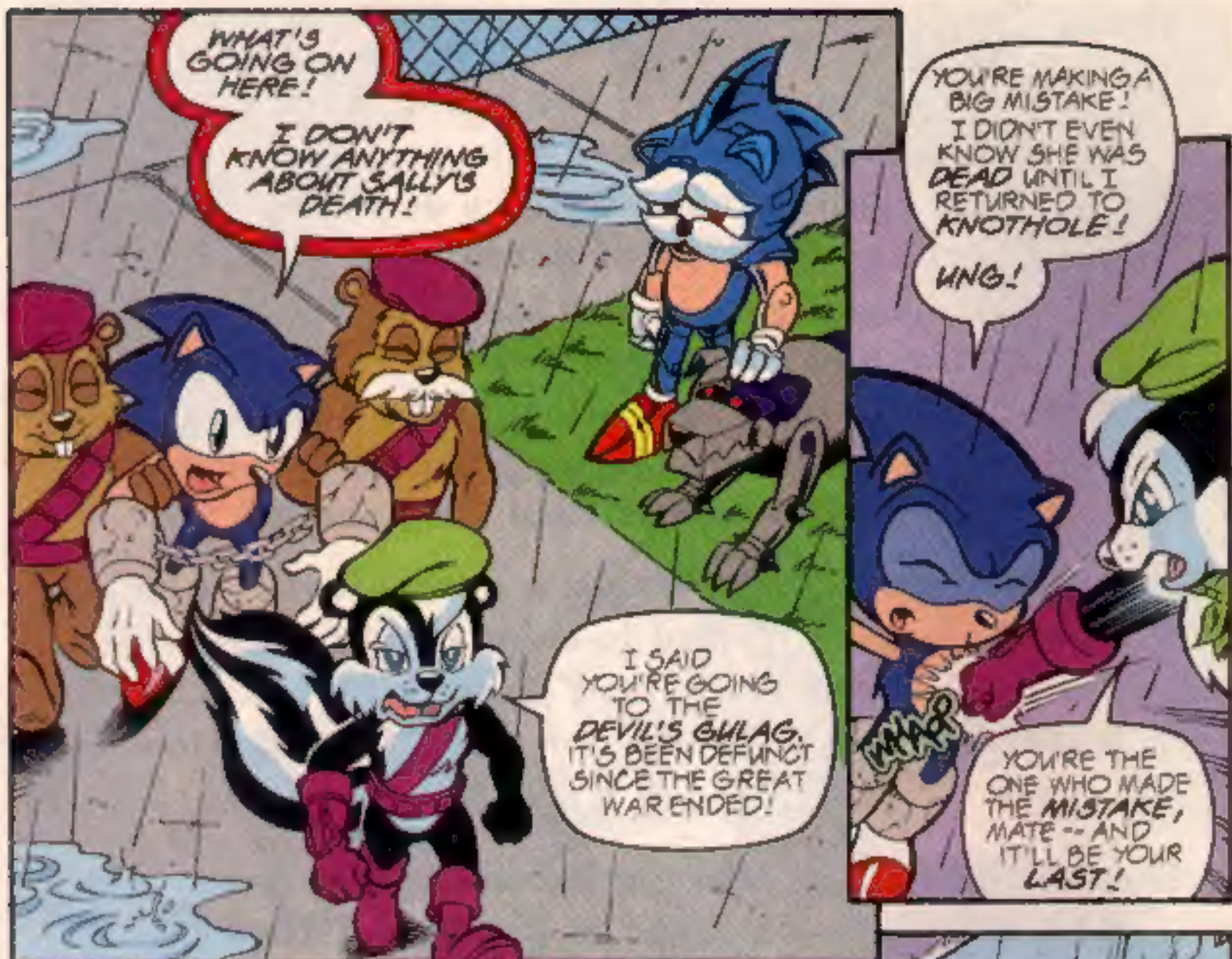
Alas, it was not to be...

During their latest mission, **Princess Sally Acorn** met sudden tragedy. Returned to **Knockhole Village**, she was pronounced DEAD. Almost as tragic was the revelation that she died at the hands of...

Sonic, **The Hedgehog** himself!

Pronouncing sentence, the king condemned the "former" hero to a life of imprisonment. While it is clear that treachery and deceit abound, it is equally unclear who **all** the conspirators are of this swift **injustice**. While it is certain that the dark forces of **Robotropolis** are preparing their next move, it is equally uncertain whether our heroes will rally, recreating the former glory of the once-gleaming city of **Mobetropolis**.

One thing cannot be disputed — no one will ever be the same...



WHAT'S GOING ON HERE!

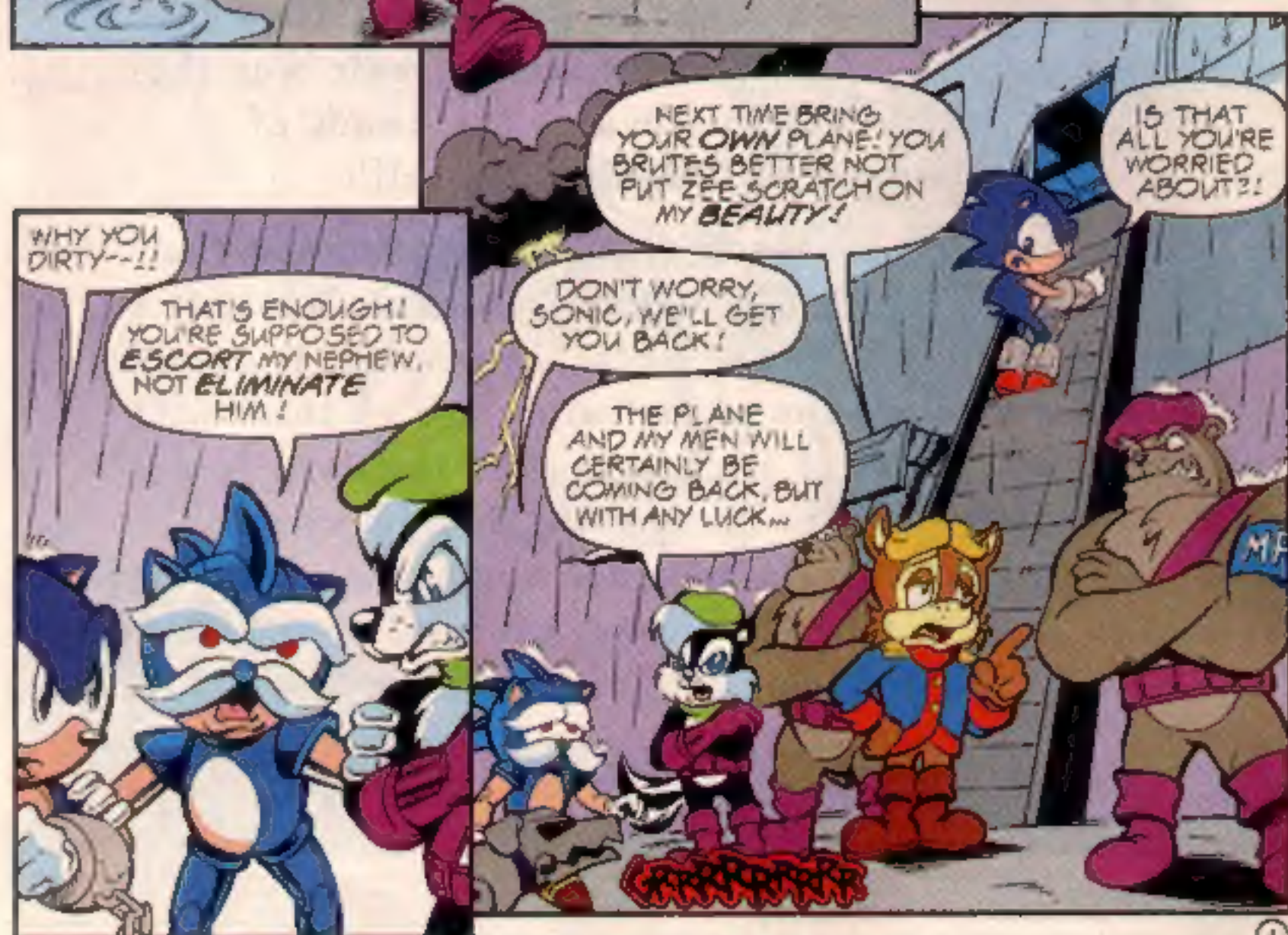
I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT SALLY'S DEATH!

YOU'RE MAKING A BIG MISTAKE! I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW SHE WAS DEAD UNTIL I RETURNED TO KNOTHOLE!

UNG!

I SAID YOU'RE GOING TO THE DEVIL'S GULAG. IT'S BEEN DEFUNCT SINCE THE GREAT WAR ENDED!

YOU'RE THE ONE WHO MADE THE MISTAKE, MATE -- AND IT'LL BE YOUR LAST!



WHY YOU DIRTY--!!

THAT'S ENOUGH! YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO ESCORT MY NEPHEW, NOT ELIMINATE HIM!

NEXT TIME BRING YOUR OWN PLANE! YOU BRUTES BETTER NOT PUT ZEE SCRATCH ON MY BEAUTY!

DON'T WORRY, SONIC, WE'LL GET YOU BACK!

THE PLANE AND MY MEN WILL CERTAINLY BE COMING BACK, BUT WITH ANY LUCK...

IS THAT ALL YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT?!



"WE'LL NEVER SEE SONIC THE HEDGEHOG AGAIN!"

HOW CAN THAT HAVE HAPPENED?!



HOW CAN MY BEST FRIEND BE RESPONSIBLE FOR AUNT SALLY'S DEATH?!

HE ISN'T!

I TELL YOU, I SAW IT--WITH ZEE TWO EYES!

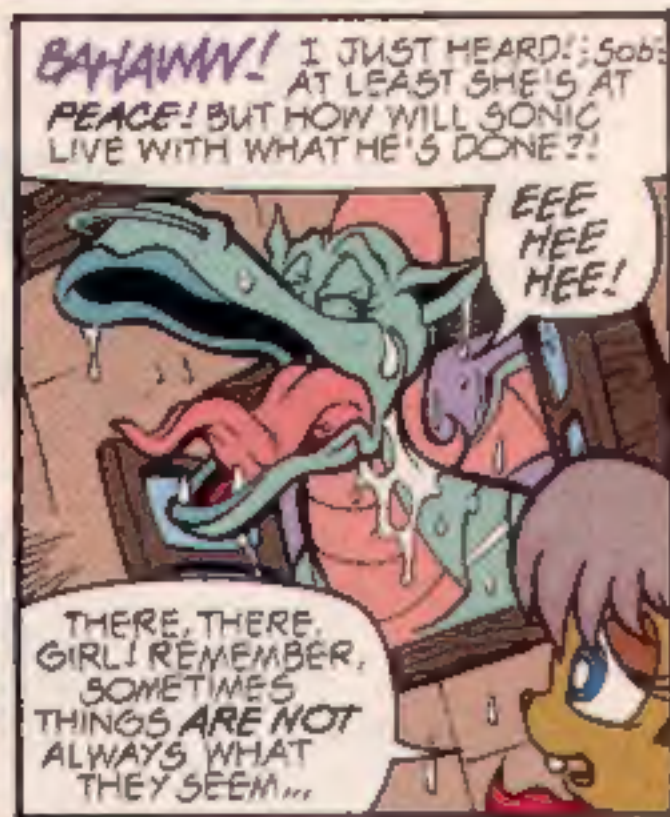
I WAS THERE TOO, SUGAR. SONIC IS GUILTY LIKE ANTOINE SAID!



BUT HOW COULD HE DO IT?

HE DIDN'T!

EASY EVERYONE, SONIC IS AS MUCH IN NEED OF OUR PRAYERS AS POOR SALLY.



BAHAWW! I JUST HEARD! Sobs
AT LEAST SHE'S AT PEACE! BUT HOW WILL SONIC LIVE WITH WHAT HE'S DONE?!

EEE HEE HEE!

THERE, THERE, GIRL! REMEMBER, SOMETIMES THINGS ARE NOT ALWAYS WHAT THEY SEEM...

CURRENTLY, HOWEVER,
THINGS SEEM PRETTY
BLEAK FOR OUR "EX?"
HERO...

THIS WHOLE
MESS STARTED WHEN
SAL GOT ORDERS TO
INVADE ROBOTROPOLIS
FROM HER DAD--A GUY
SUPPOSEDLY TURNING
TO CRYSTAL!

*KING ACORN'S MALADY WAS
REVEALED IN SONIC QUEST #1~FG

AND NOW THAT SAME
KING HAS EXILED ME TO
THE PLACE OF MY BOY-
HOOD NIGHTMARES --

WHERE MY DAD USED
TO TELL ME ALL **BAD**
BOYS AND WAR PRIS-
ONERS WERE SENT --

--THE
DEVIL'S GULAG!

HOW'D HE
GET BETTER SO
FAST AND...

LOOKS LIKE I WASN'T
THE ONLY **DOUBLE AGENT!**
WHAT DID ROBOTNIK
PROMISE YOU--YOUR VERY
OWN **CHILI DOG CHAIN?**

Huh?

SLEUTH DOGGY DOG!
YOU TREASONOUS TRAITOR! *
I'M GONNA... Umph!

How! How! THE ONCE
HEROIC SONIC, REDUCED
TO A CHAINED-UP CON!
YOU TEAR ME UP!

I'LL REALLY
TEAR YOU GUYS
UP IF YOU DON'T
SHUT UP!

*SLEUTH'S TREACHERY WAS
REVEALED IN SONIC #42--Jailer Justice!



NEVER MIND
THEM! WE'VE GOT
A PROBLEM!

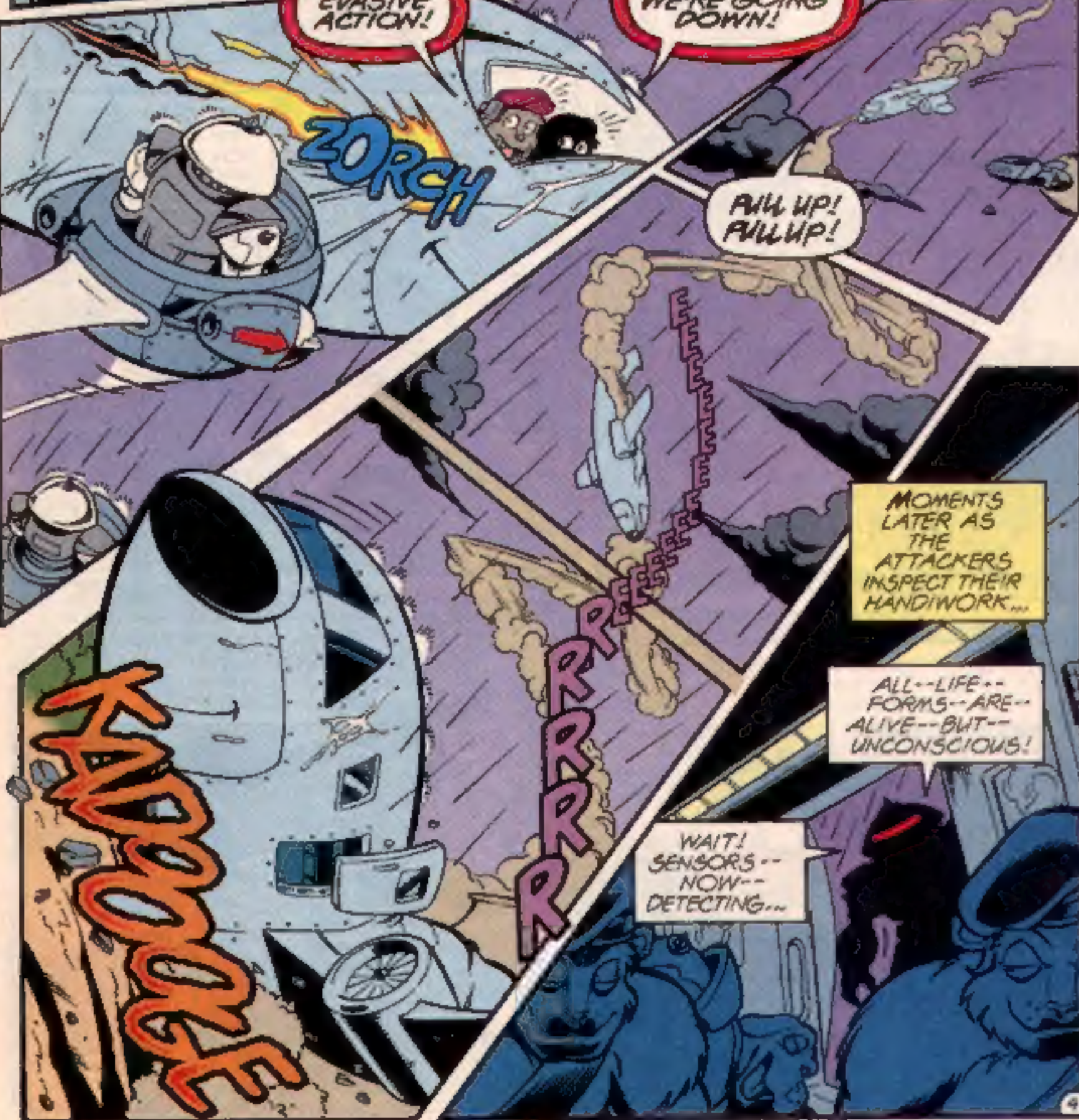
LOOK
OUT!

EVASIVE
ACTION!

TOO LATE!
WE'RE GOING
DOWN!

ZORCH

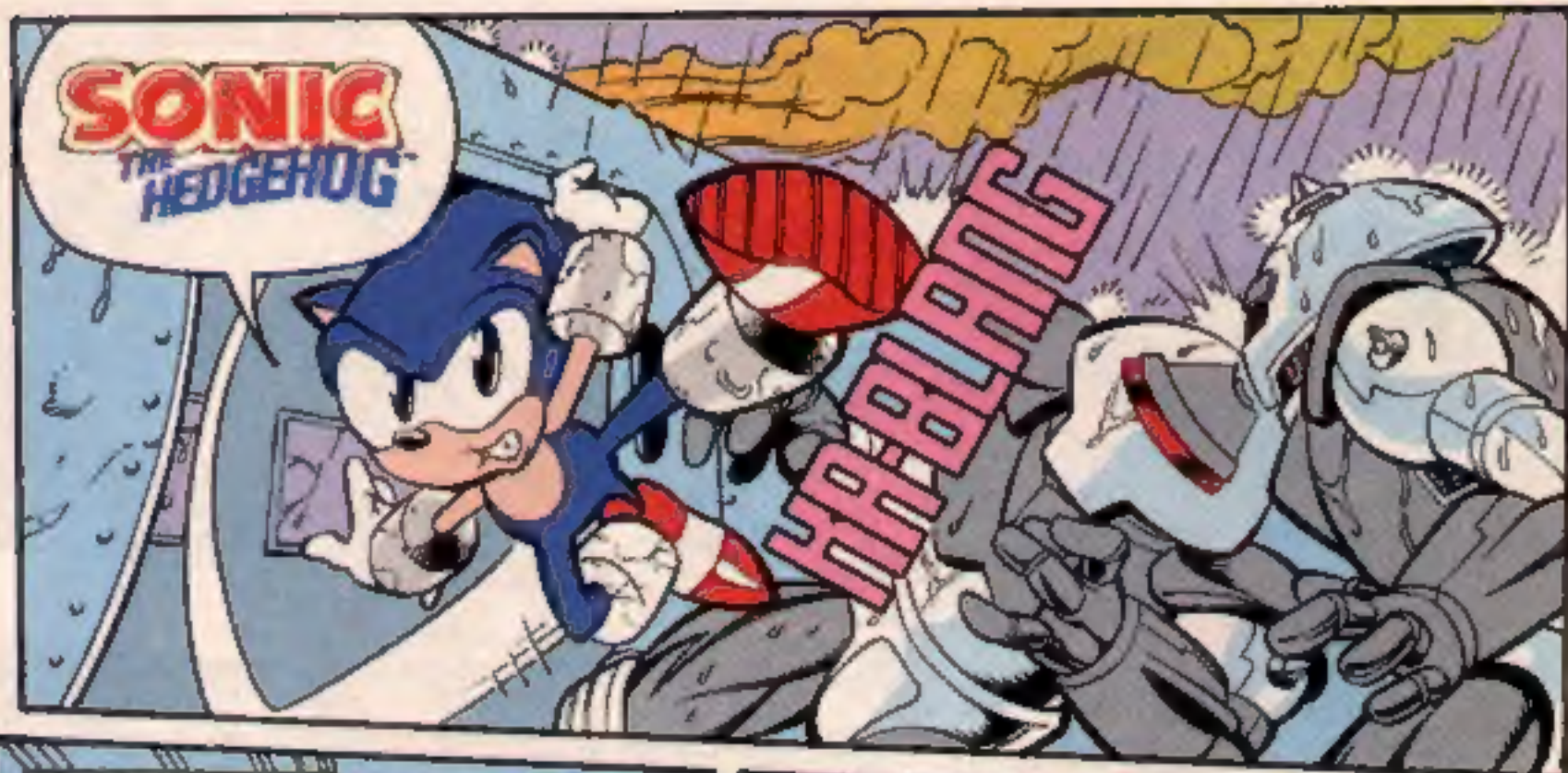
PULL UP!
PULL UP!



MOMENTS
LATER AS
THE
ATTACKERS
INSPECT THEIR
HANDWORK...

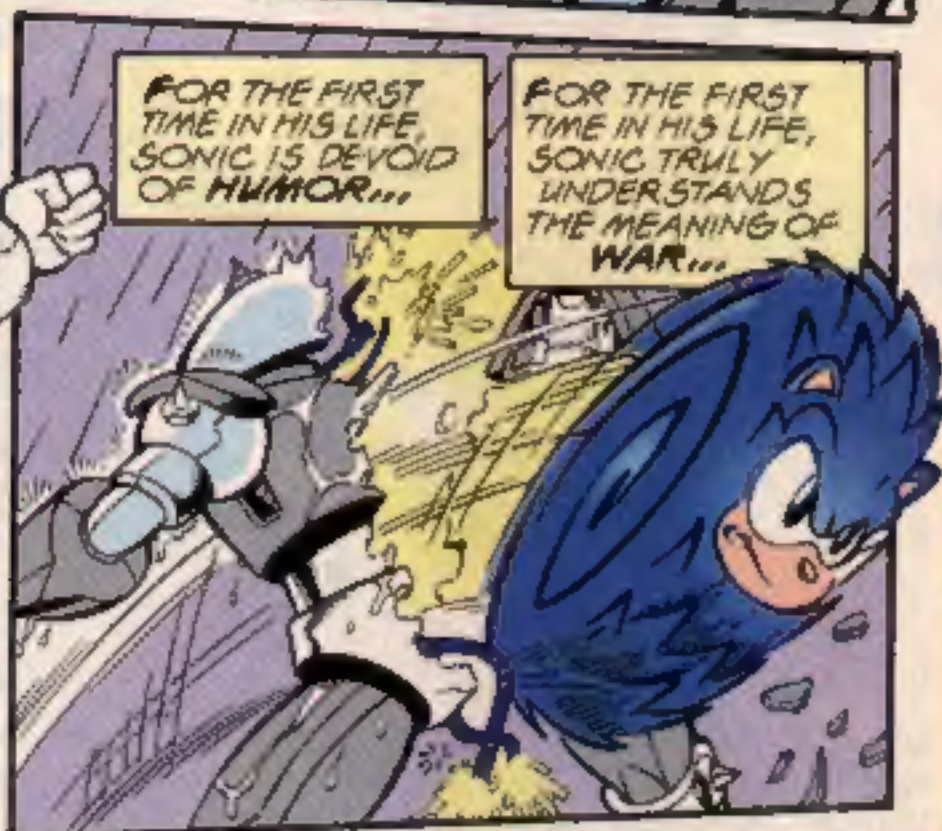
ALL--LIFE--
FORMS--ARE--
ALIVE--BUT--
UNCONSCIOUS!

WAIT!
SENSORS--
NOW--
DETECTING...



THOSE ARE THE
LAST WORDS
SONIC UTTERS...

NOT ONE SINGLE
JOKE OR WISE-
CRACK ESCAPES
HIS LIPS...



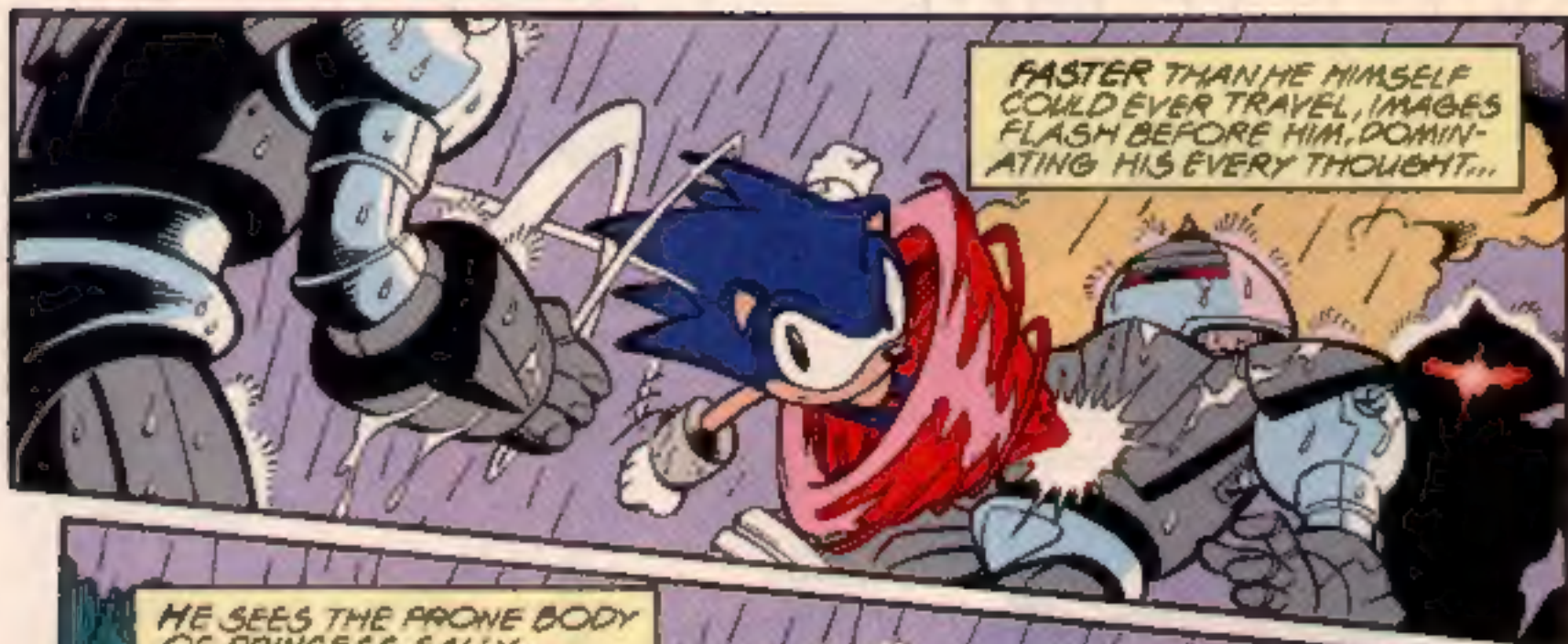
FOR THE FIRST
TIME IN HIS LIFE,
SONIC IS DEVOID
OF HUMOR...

FOR THE FIRST
TIME IN HIS LIFE,
SONIC TRULY
UNDERSTANDS
THE MEANING OF
WAR...

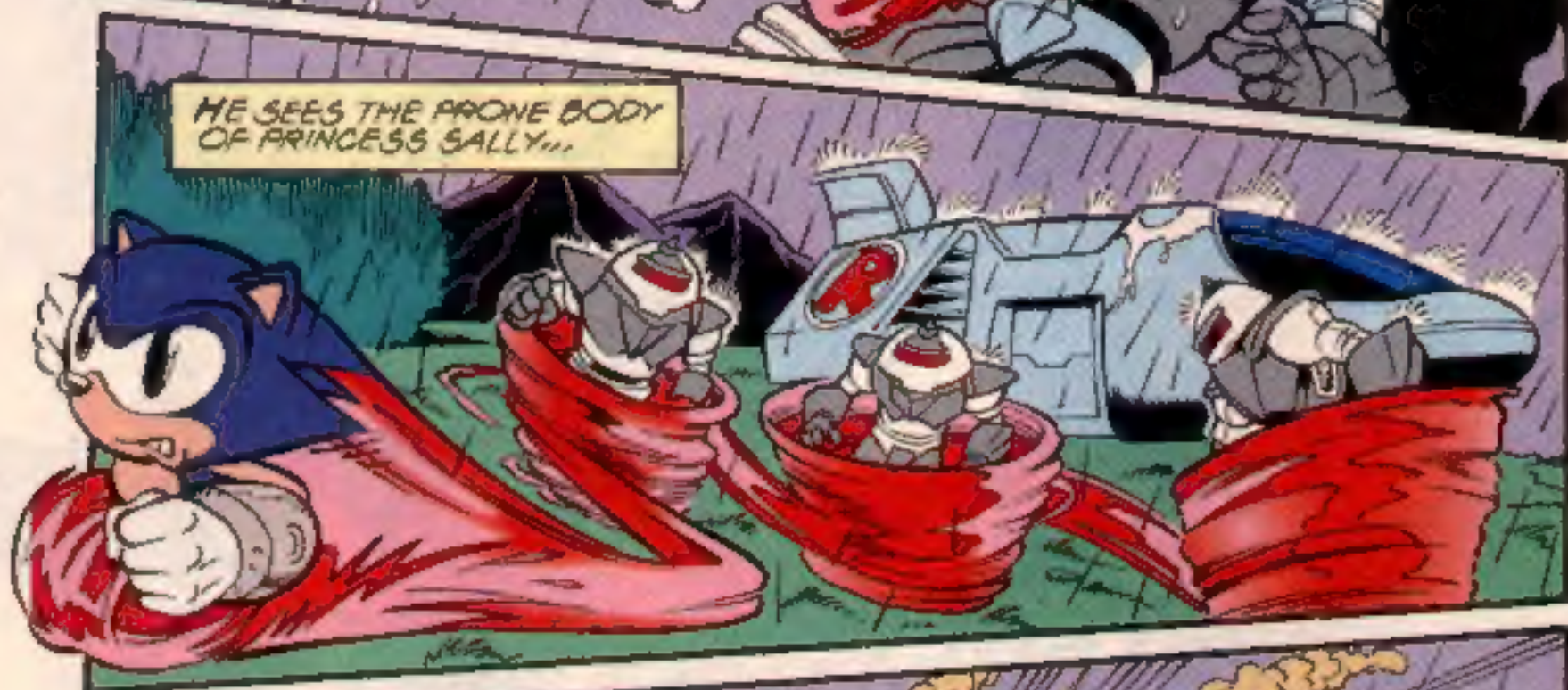


HIS BODY IS ON AUTOPILOT,
AS HE FIGHTS LIKE NEVER
BEFORE...

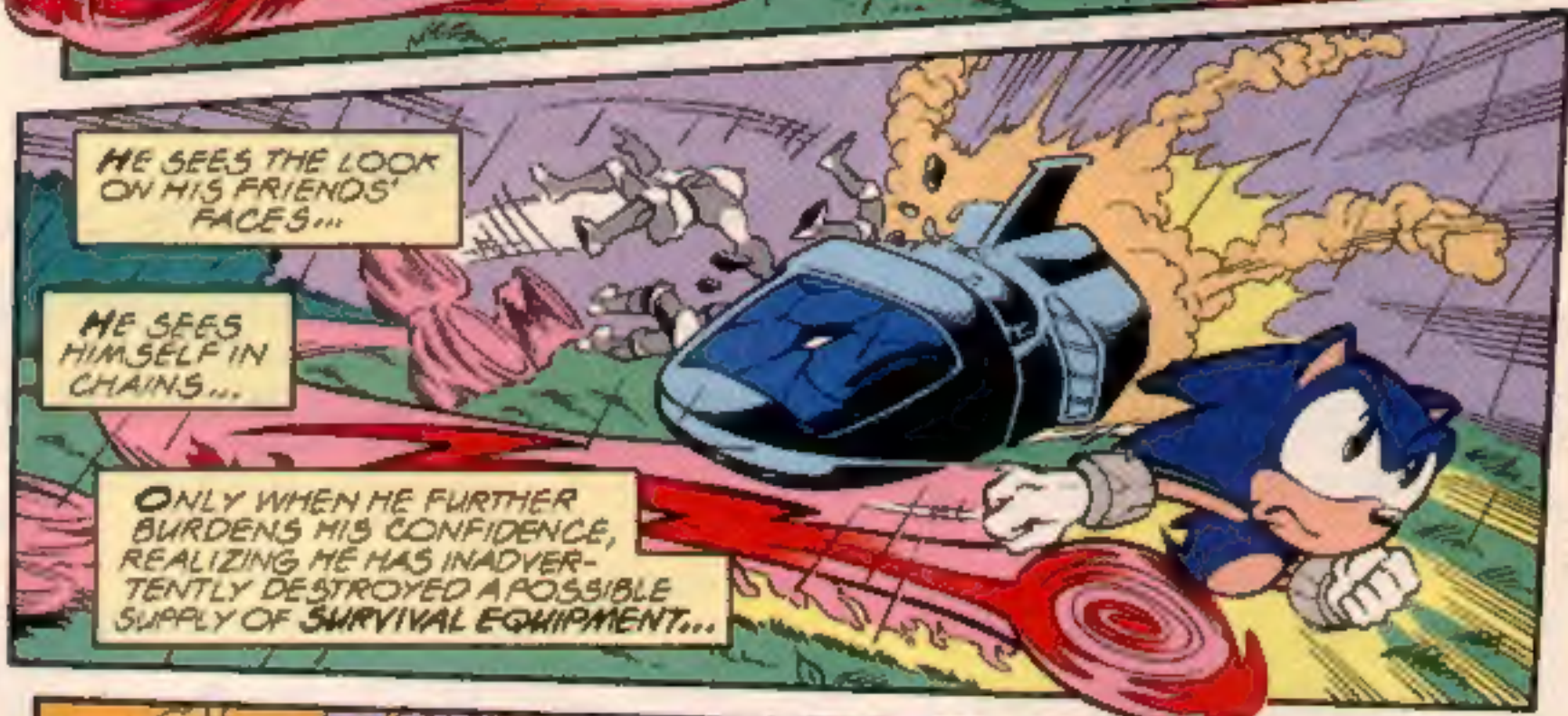
THIS IS FORTUNATE,
FOR HIS BRAIN IS
OTHERWISE
OCCUPIED...



FASTER THAN HE HIMSELF
COULD EVER TRAVEL, IMAGES
FLASH BEFORE HIM, DOMIN-
ATING HIS EVERY THOUGHT...



HE SEES THE PRONE BODY
OF PRINCESS SALLY...



HE SEES THE LOOK
ON HIS FRIENDS'
FACES...

HE SEES
HIMSELF IN
CHAINS...

ONLY WHEN HE FURTHER
BURDENS HIS CONFIDENCE,
REALIZING HE HAS INADVER-
TENTLY DESTROYED A POSSIBLE
SUPPLY OF SURVIVAL EQUIPMENT...



...DOES HIS MIND REGAIN CONTROL,
MAKING HIM AWARE THAT THIS MINOR
BATTLE IS OVER, AND IT IS ONCE AGAIN
TIME TO TAKE FLIGHT!

WHILE THE DEPARTING SONIC PONDER'S HIS DESTINY, OTHERS ARE ALREADY PREPARING FOR HIS IMMEDIATE FUTURE...

AMH, YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS, FORGIVE MY INTERRUPTION OF YOUR MEDITATIONS, BUT I'M GLAD I'VE CAUGHT YOU ALONE!

YOUR REPORTS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME, FAITHFUL DRAGO!

I'M SORRY TO REPORT THAT THE PLANE TRANSPORTING SONIC HAS CRASHED MILES AWAY FROM THE PLANNED DESTINATION...! THE MP'S ARE OKAY AND SNOOP IS STILL IN CUSTODY, BUT--

SONIC HAS ESCAPED!

PITY, IT APPEARS HE WILL HAVE TO BE HUNTED DOWN LIKE A DOG... OR BY DOGS!

SEND IN ST. JOHN...

SHORTLY...

YOUR MEN HAVE FAILED ME, GEOFFREY! SONIC THE HEDGEHOG HAS ESCAPED!

...BUT MY MEN ARE THE FINEST-TRAINED SOLDIERS ANYWHERE!

GIVE ME NOT YOUR EXCUSES, MAN! I WON'T HAVE A MURDERER FREE IN MY SOON-TO-BE RESTORED KINGDOM!

FORGIVE ME, YOUR MAJESTY! I'LL ROUST MY MEN IMMEDIATELY! AND I MAKE YOU THIS PLEDGE--

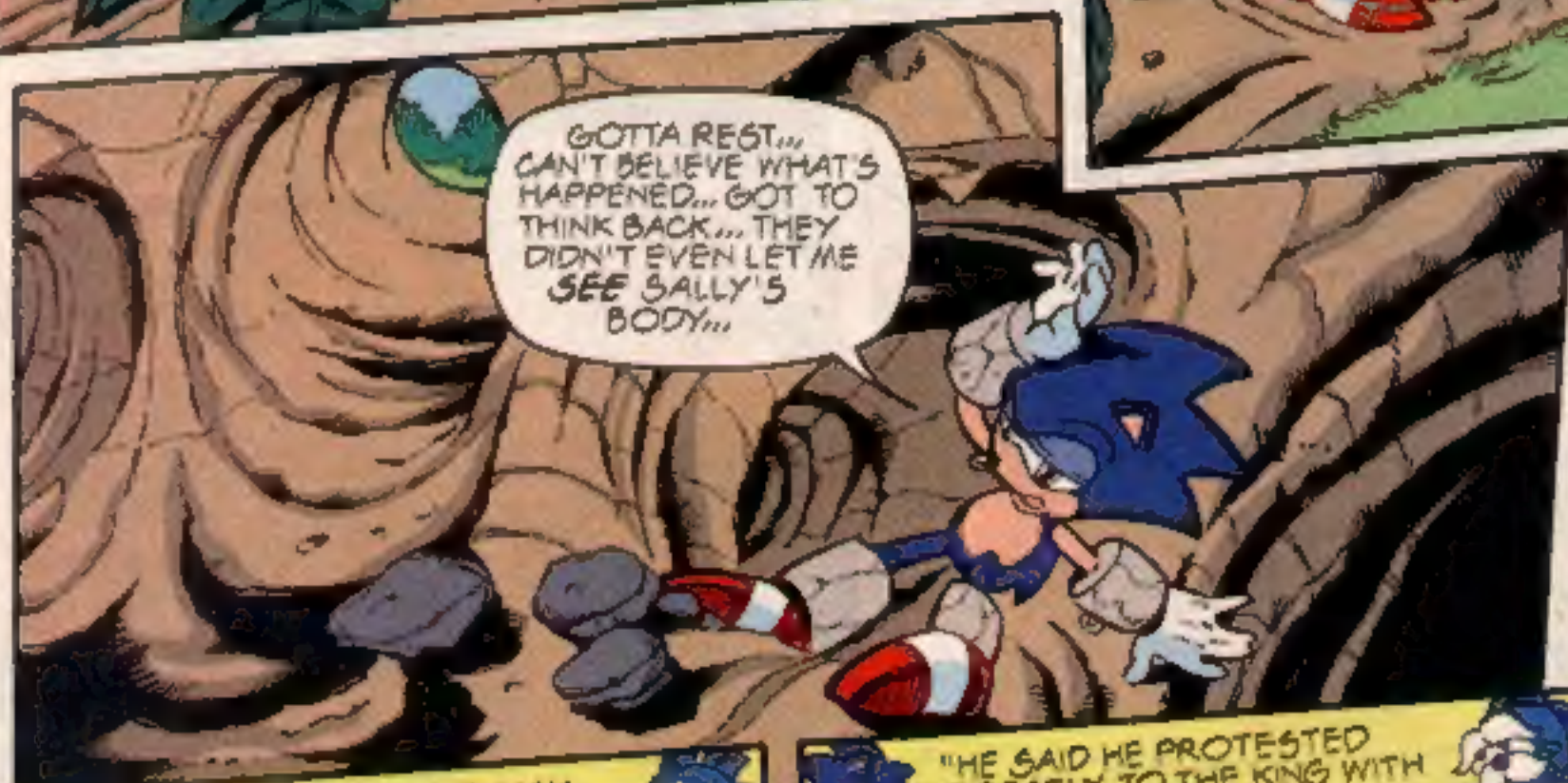
--IF IT'S THE LAST THING I DO I WILL RECAPTURE THAT HEDGEHOG!



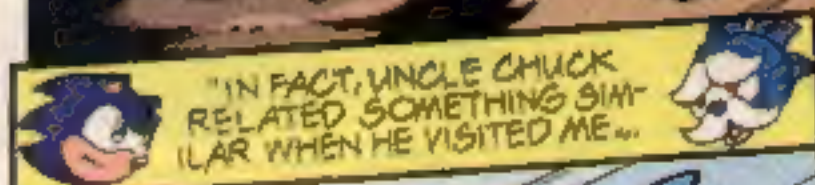
GOT TO COVER MY FOOTPRINTS-- PREVENT THOSE MPs OR ANY MORE SWAT-BOTS FROM TRACKING ME!



DON'T KNOW IF THOSE SWATBOTS WERE ON PATROL OR A SPECIAL MISSION, BUT THAT WAS ONE TIME I WAS GLAD TO SEE 'EM!



GOTTA REST... CAN'T BELIEVE WHAT'S HAPPENED... GOT TO THINK BACK... THEY DIDN'T EVEN LET ME SEE SALLY'S BODY...

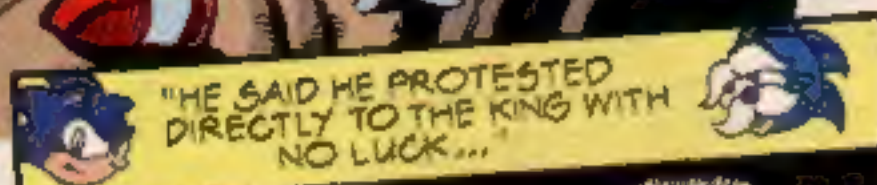


"IN FACT, UNCLE CHUCK RELATED SOMETHING SIMILAR WHEN HE VISITED ME..."



...AND I'M TELLING YOU, I WANT TO SEE SALLY'S FINAL MEDICAL REPORT!

NO! THE KING HAS ORDERED THOSE RECORDS SEALED, OFF LIMITS TO EVERYONE!



"HE SAID HE PROTESTED DIRECTLY TO THE KING WITH NO LUCK..."



IN ALL DUE RESPECT, IF I'M TO FULLY INVESTIGATE THESE PROCEEDINGS...

THERE WILL BE NO INVESTIGATION AND NO PROCEEDINGS! I WILL PRONOUNCE SENTENCE AT DAWN!

"AND HE DIDN'T NEED ANY OF HIS ESPIONAGE EXPERIENCE TO REALIZE SOMETHING WAS WAY PAST UNCOOL..."

I THINK OUR "CAMPFIRE POW WOW" REVEALED THE TRUTH -- THERE IS A TRAITOR OR TRAITORS IN OUR MIDST... AND I KNOW IT'S NOT YOU!"

IT HAPPENED IN SONIC #46 -- POW WOW FREDDY.

HE WAS THE ONLY ONE WHO GOT PAST THE SHOCK AND HAD HIS STUFF TOGETHER.

DON'T GIVE UP HOPE, SONIC. I KNOW I WON'T UNTIL JUSTICE IS SERVED!

SONIC'S MIND REELS IN TURMOIL...

AND WHEN HIS CAPACITY TO PONDER CURRENTLY UNANSWERABLE QUESTIONS COMES TO AN END...

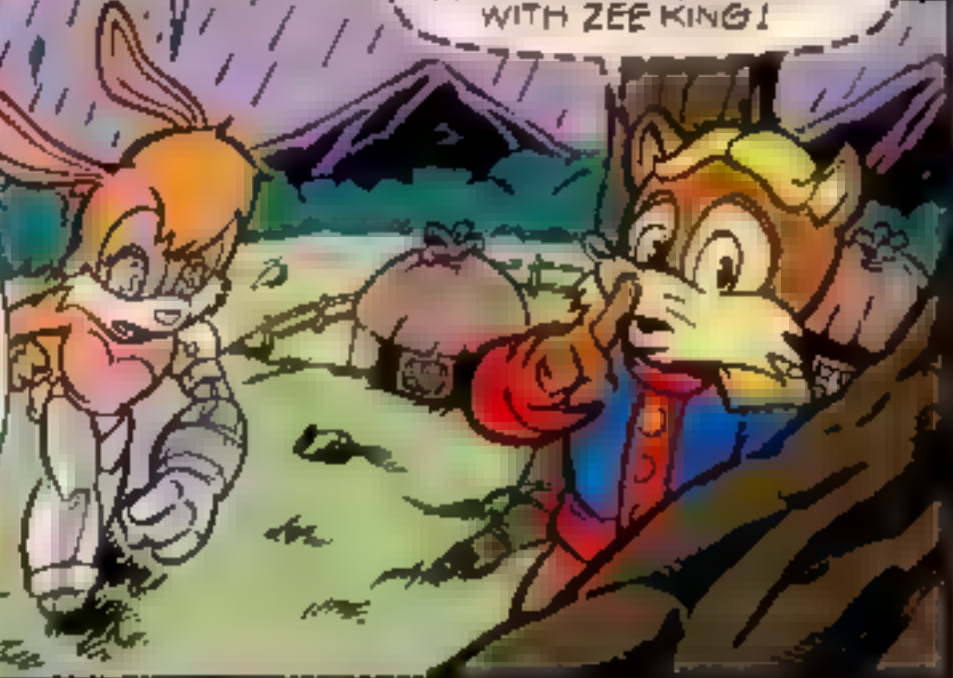
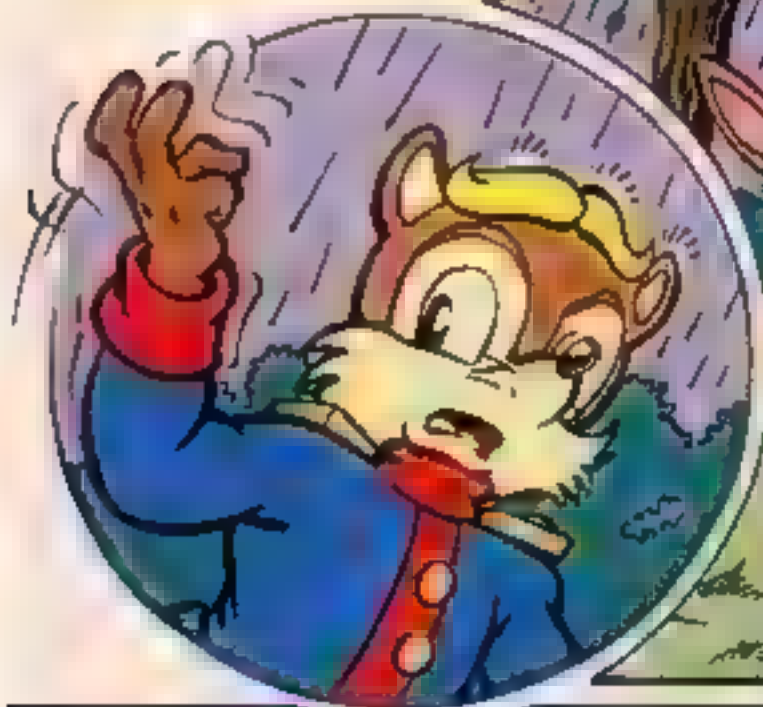
... ONLY THEN DOES HE FEEL THE TRUE IMPACT OF SALLY'S PASSING...

... ONLY THEN DOES THE STRESS AND GRIEF FORCE HIS BODY TO SUGGUMB TO SLEEP.

BACK AT KNOTHOLE
VILLAGE...

WHAT'S UP,
ANTOINE?

ISSHE VERY BE-ZARRE!
MOMENTS AGO, DRAGO,
AND THEN "LE PEW" GOT
ZEE PRIVATE AUDIENCE
WITH ZEE KING!



THESE ARE
TERRIBLE TIMES,
SUGAH!

REALLY?! THEN WHY
HAVE WE NOT BEEN
GRANTED ZEE SAME
PRIVILEGE?

AH DON'T
KNOW! BUT AT
LEAST T CON-
FIRMS THAT
GEOFFREY IS
GENUINE!

PERHAPS BUT DRAGO?
HE NEVER CLAIMED TO
BE IN ZEE KING'S
CONFIDENCE!

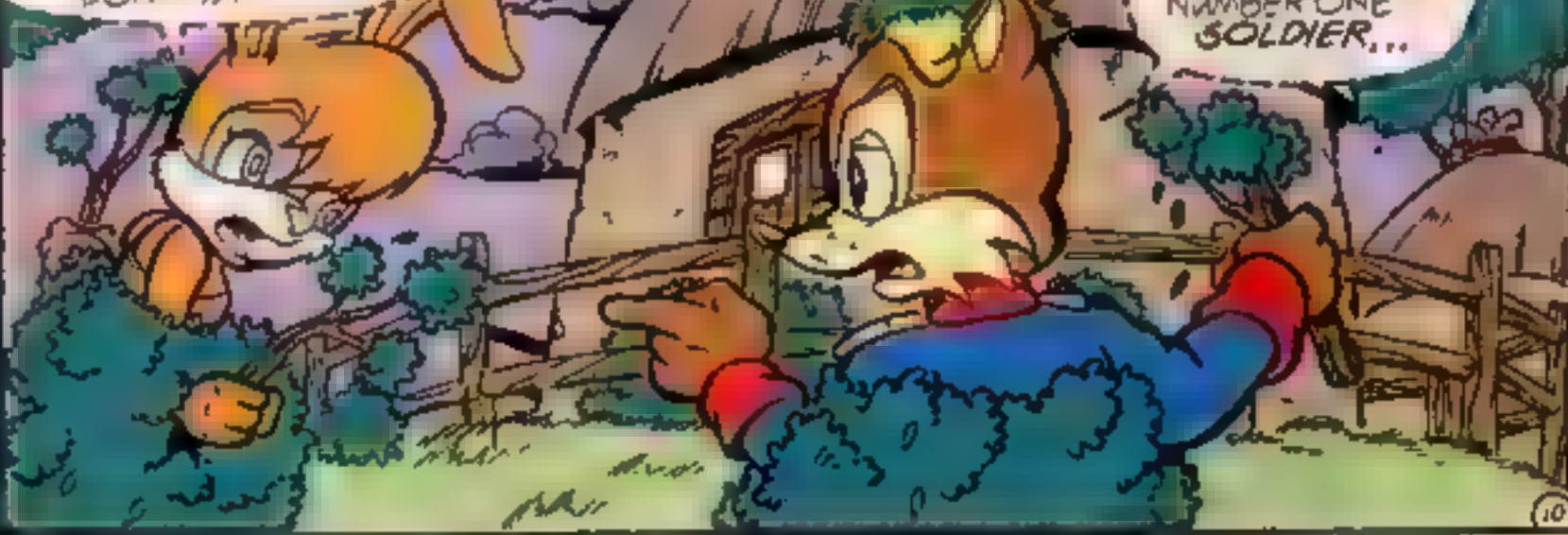
AND DURING SONIC'S
JUDGEMENT, WHY
DID HE KEEP ZEE
DISTANCE FROM ZEE
WOLFPACK?!



A TWIN BELIEVES GEOFFREY TO BE
A SPY. SEE SONIC AND -- FREDDY 'OZ.

AH DON'T KNOW!
BUT Y'ALL REALIZE
THAT WE'VE BEEN
FOLLOWING DRAGO,
DON'T YA?

OUI. I HAVE
SAID THAT I WAS
DESTINED TO BE
HIS MAJESTY'S
NUMBER ONE
SOLDIER...



"AND IF ZEE KING CANNOT
SEE THE GREAT FOREST FOR
ZEE TREES, THEN I WILL DO
MY DUTY AS ZEE RAIDER
OF ZEE TRAITORS!"

HELLO, DEAR! THE
FUTURE "DUKE" OF
ROBOTROPOL IS
HOOVE!

LEAVE ME OUT
OF YOUR FUTURE!
I'VE DONE MY
PART--AND THAT'S
ENOUGH!

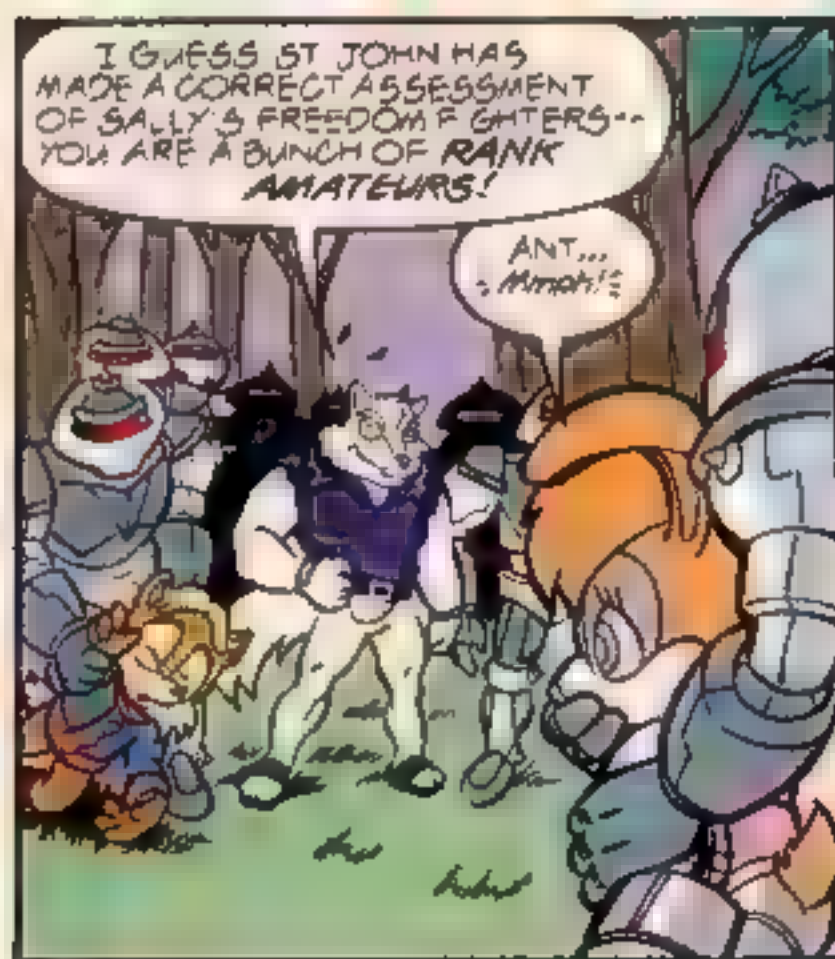
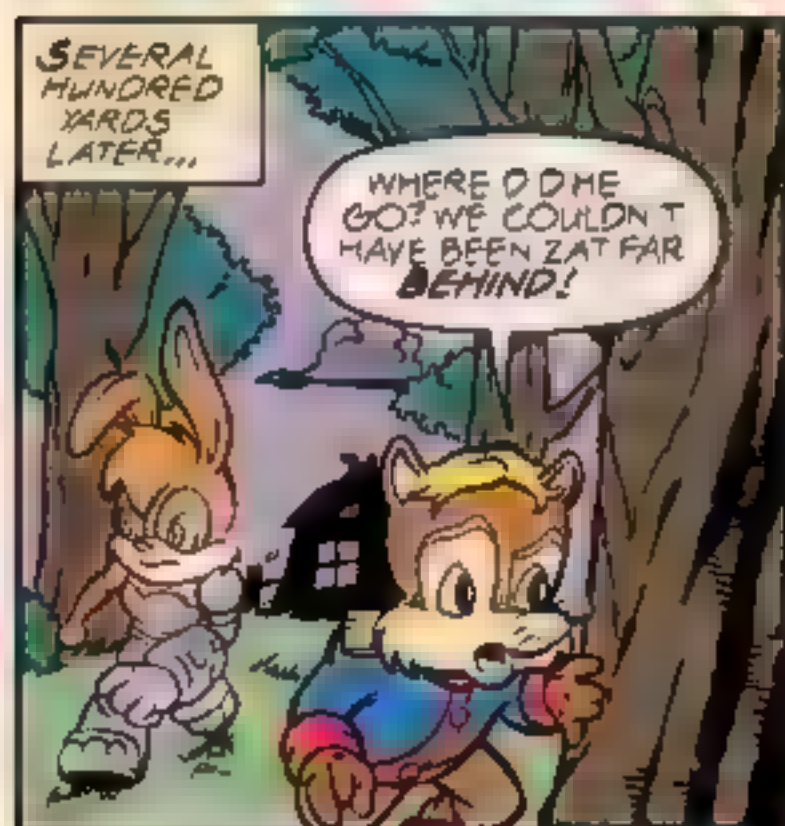
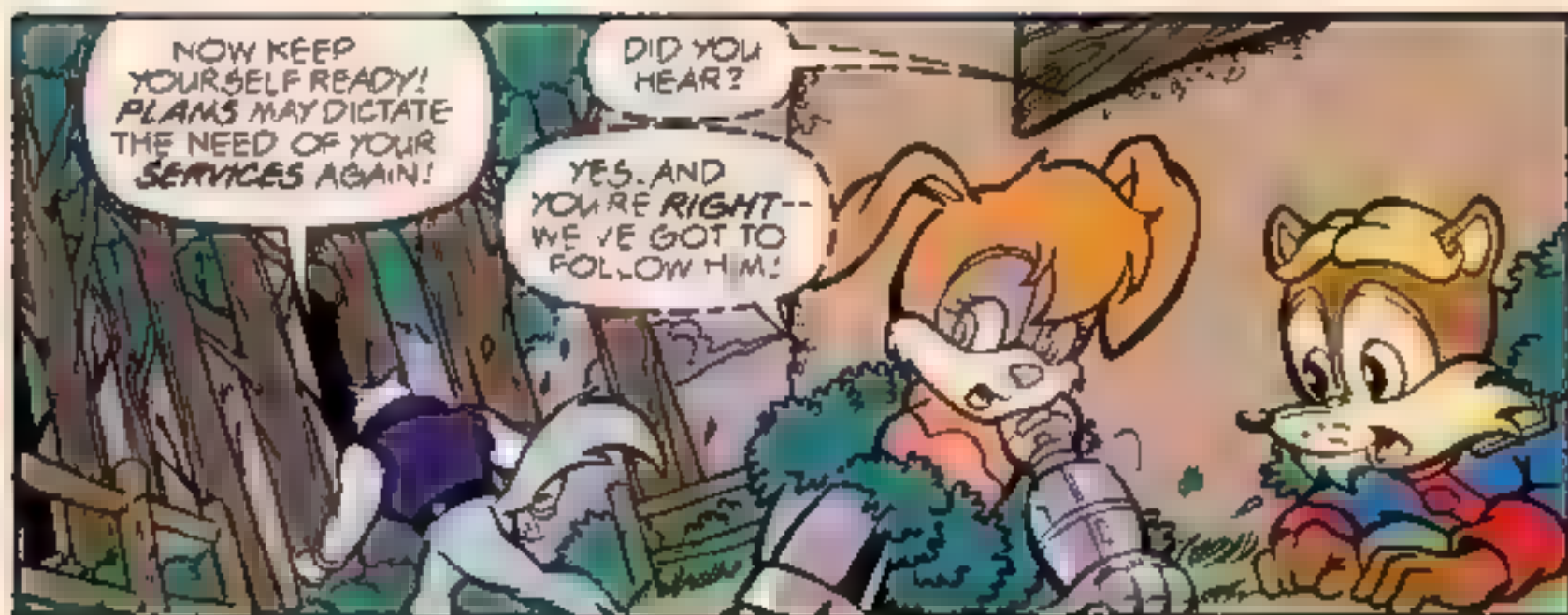
AND IN
APPRECIATION
OF YOUR HELP,
MAYBE I'LL MAKE
YOU MY FUTURE
"DUCHESS"!

DON'T TAKE THAT
TONE WITH ME! YOU'RE
INTO THIS UP TO YOUR
PRETTY NECK!

YOU'RE
HURTING
MY ARM!

THEN YOU
LISTEN HERE! SONIC
HAS ESCAPED
GEOFFREY'S MEN!
BUT ST. JOHN HIMSELF
HAS BEEN ORDERED
TO HUNT HIM
DOWN.

I'M SURE HE'LL
FIND HIM, AND WITH
ANY LUCK, THEY'LL
ELIMINATE EACH
OTHER!



FAVORITE SONIC

Tanner Lucas
Apple Valley, CA



Brian Morrow
Baltimore, MD
Age 10



Jonathan Perez
Greene Park, NY
Age 10

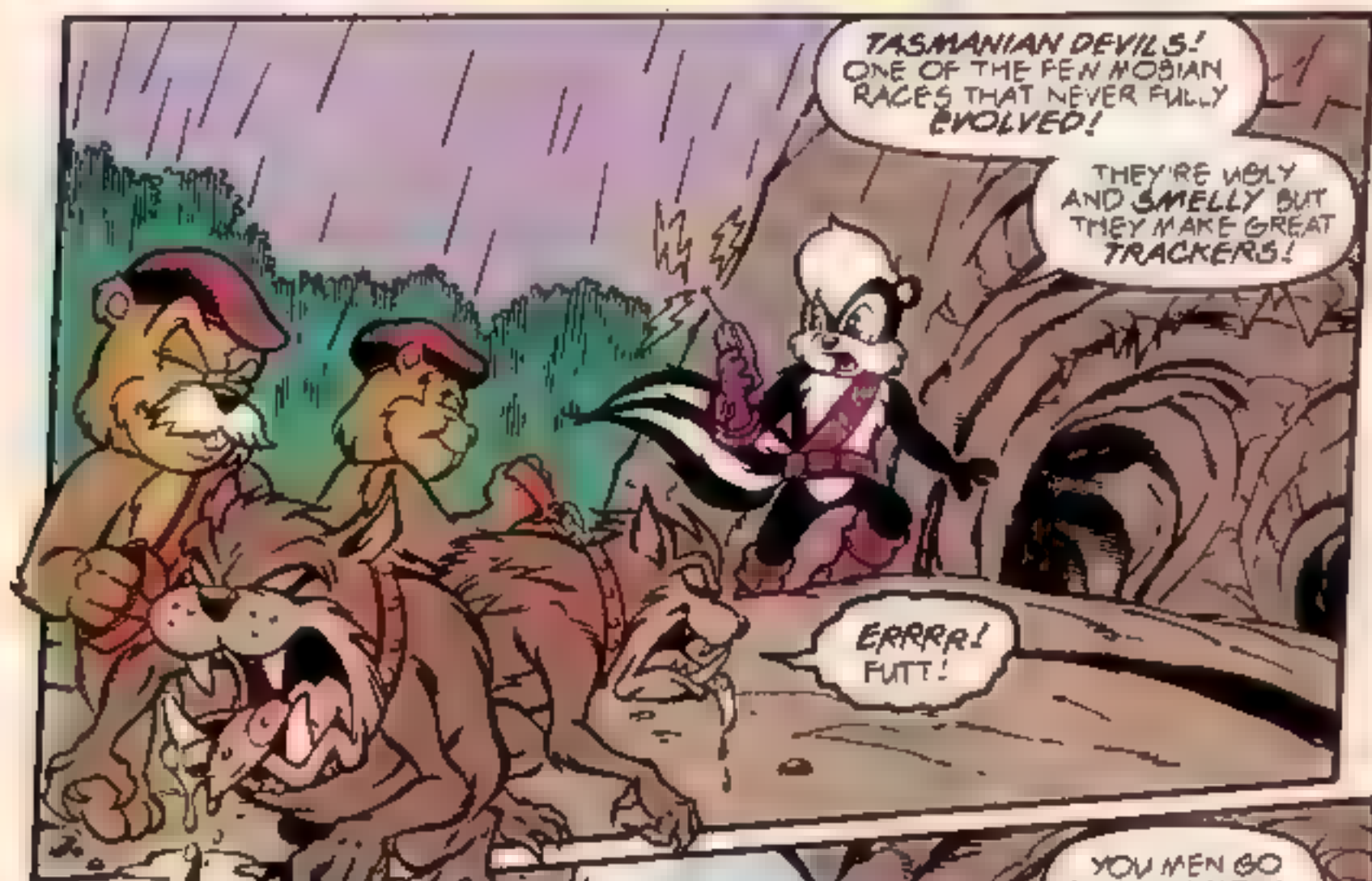
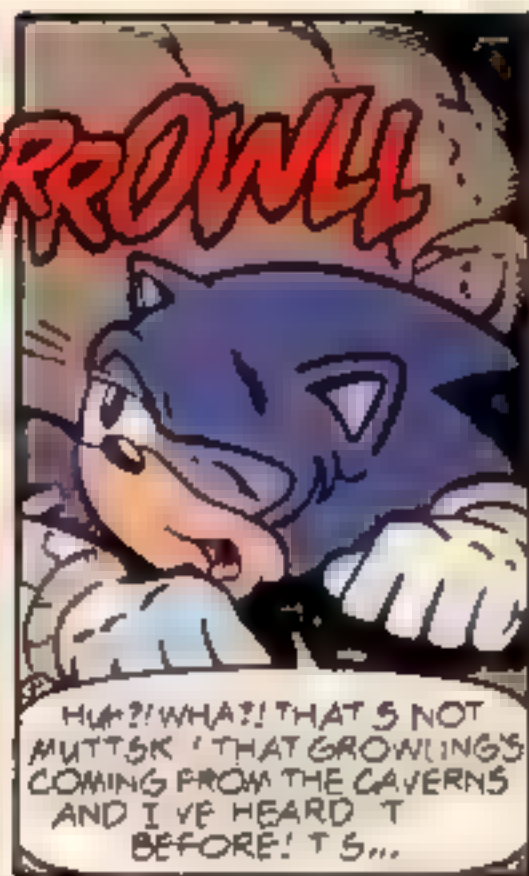
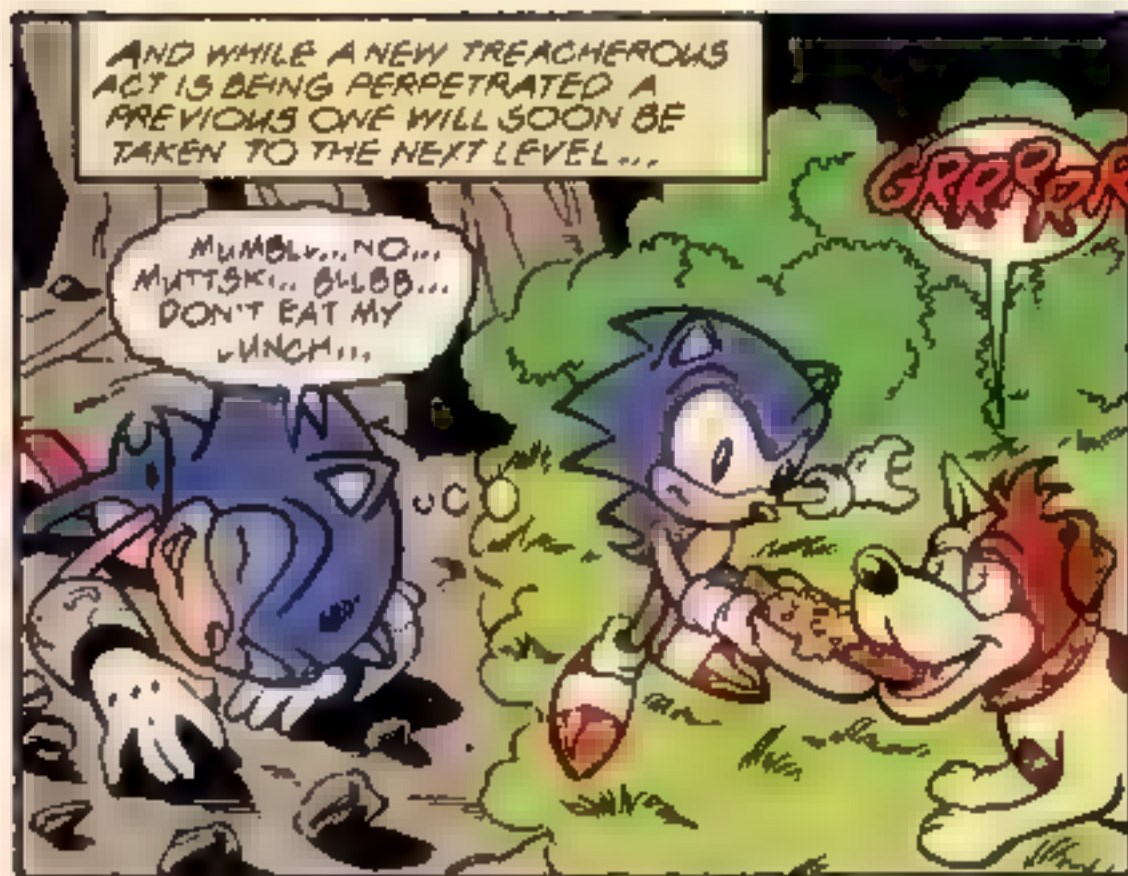


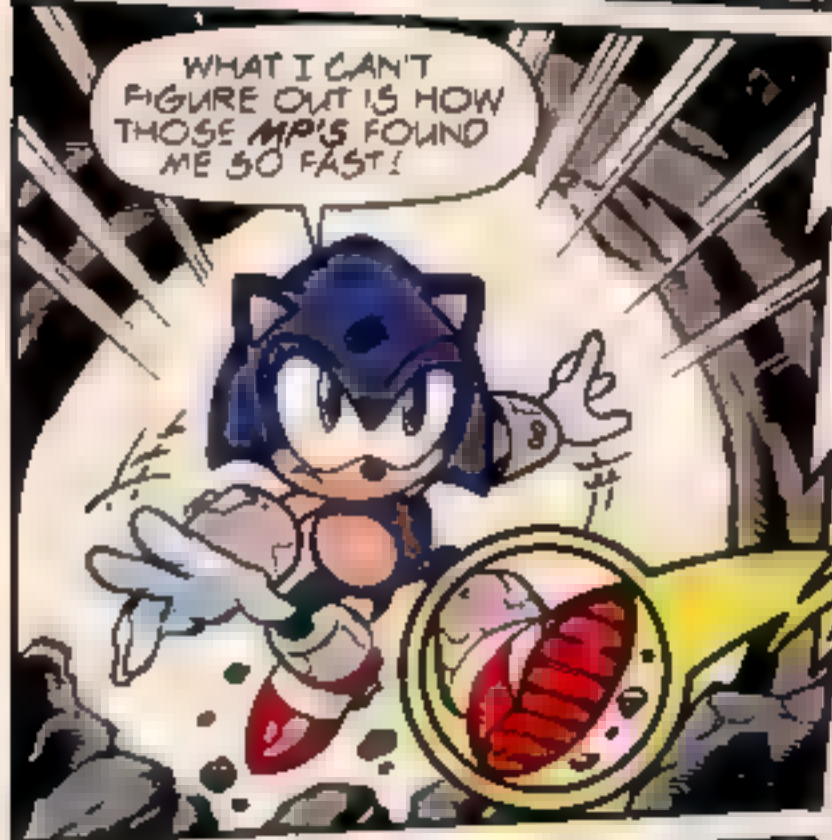
Brandon Gould
Easton, MD
Age 15

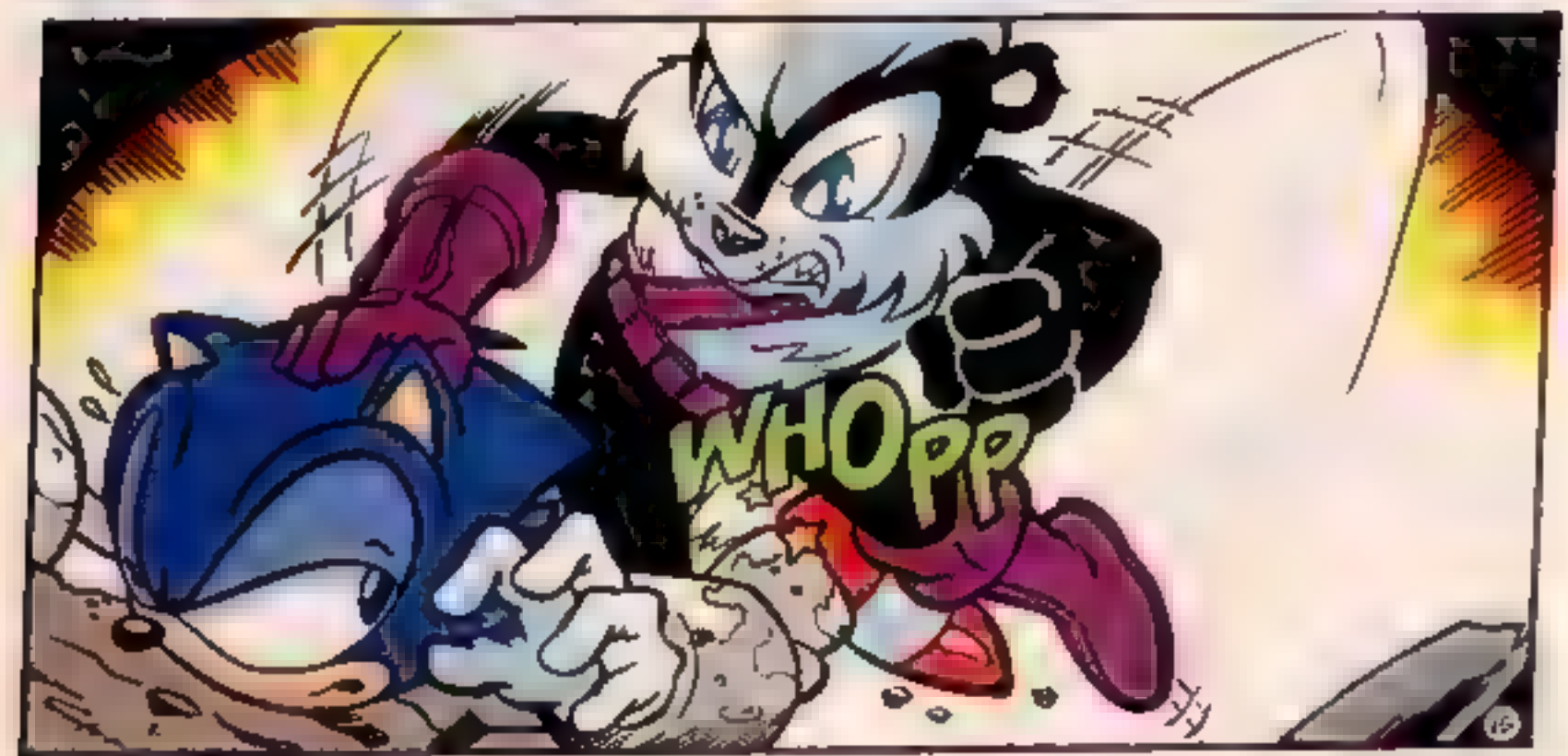
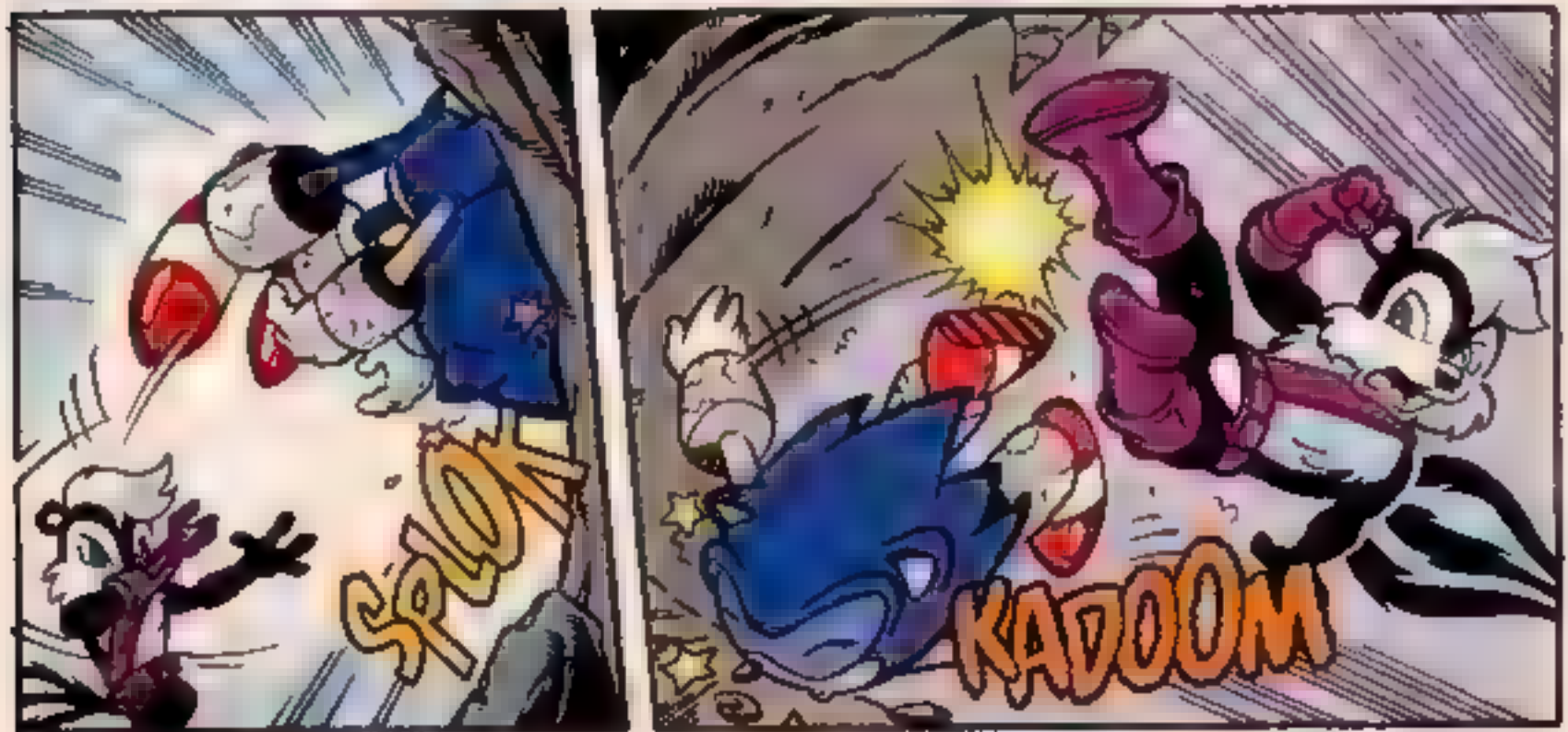
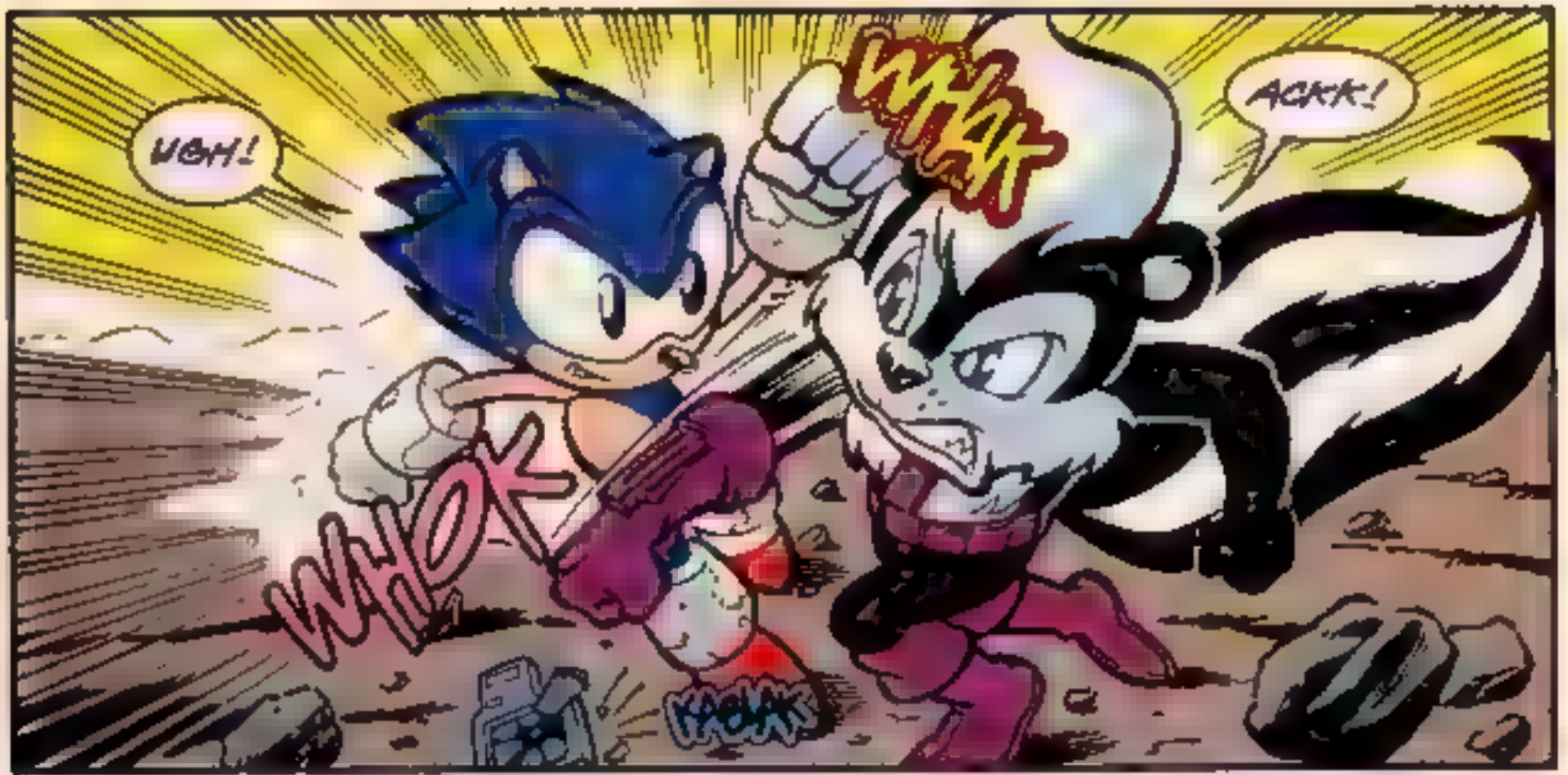


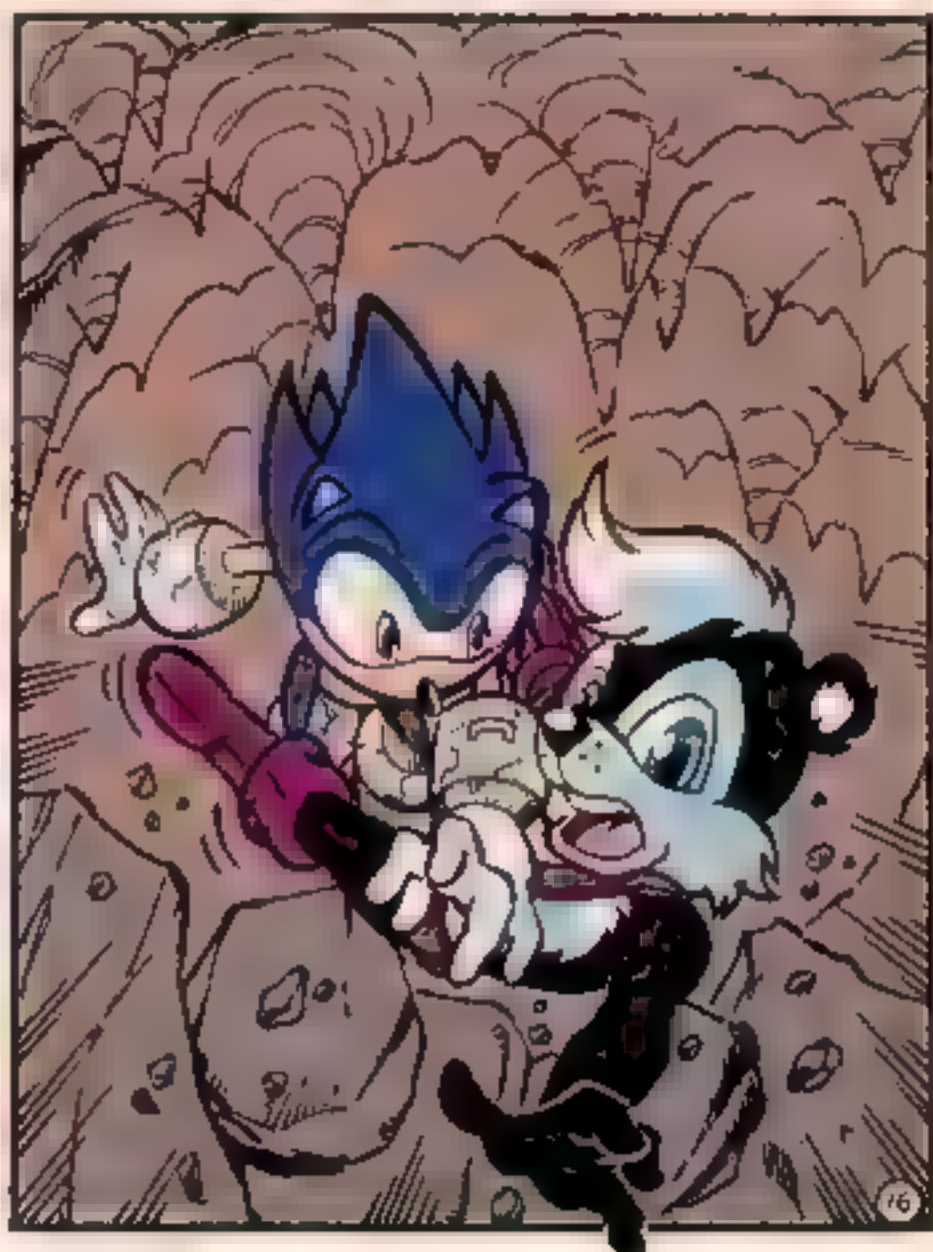
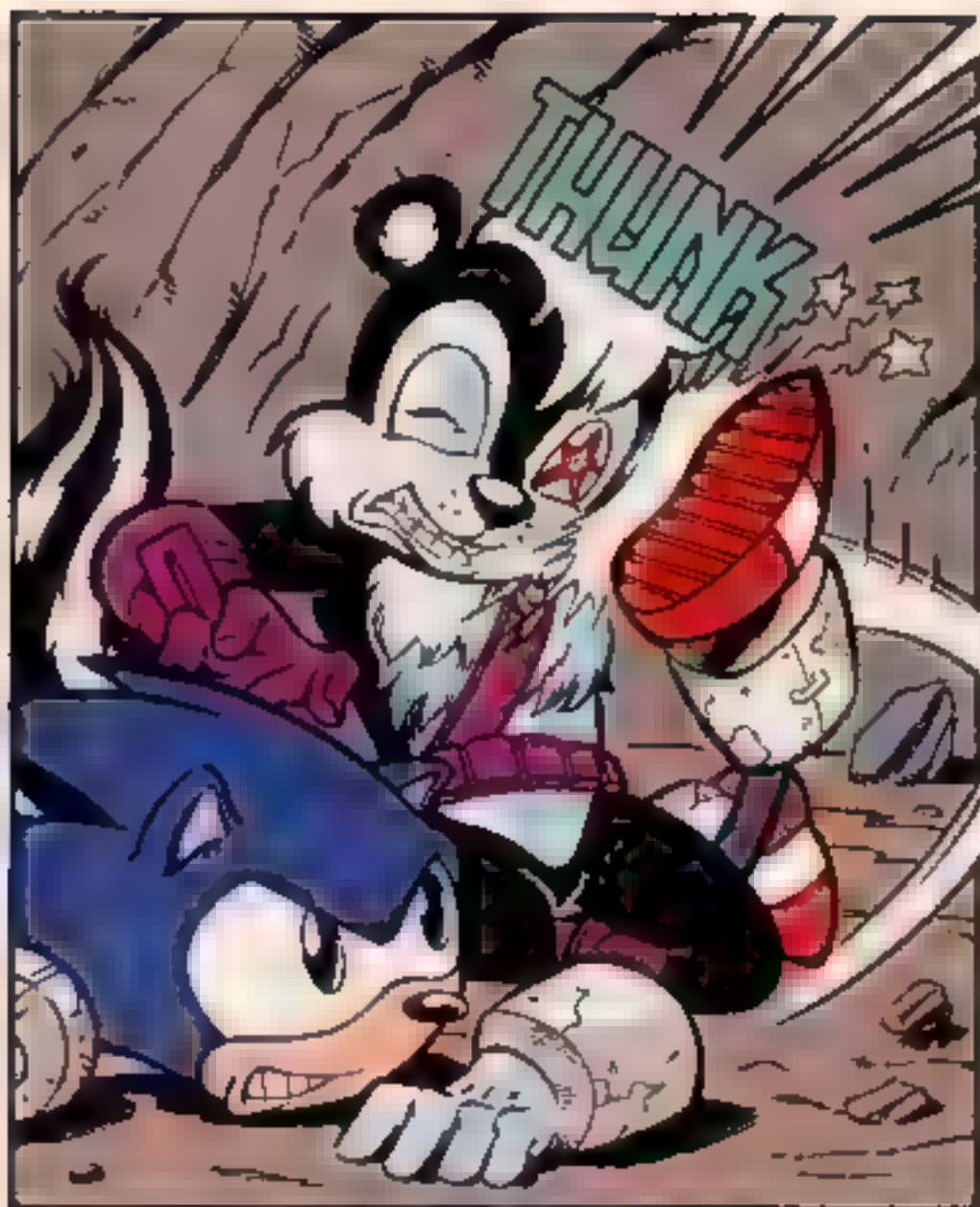
Darby Jausson
Tortuga, WA

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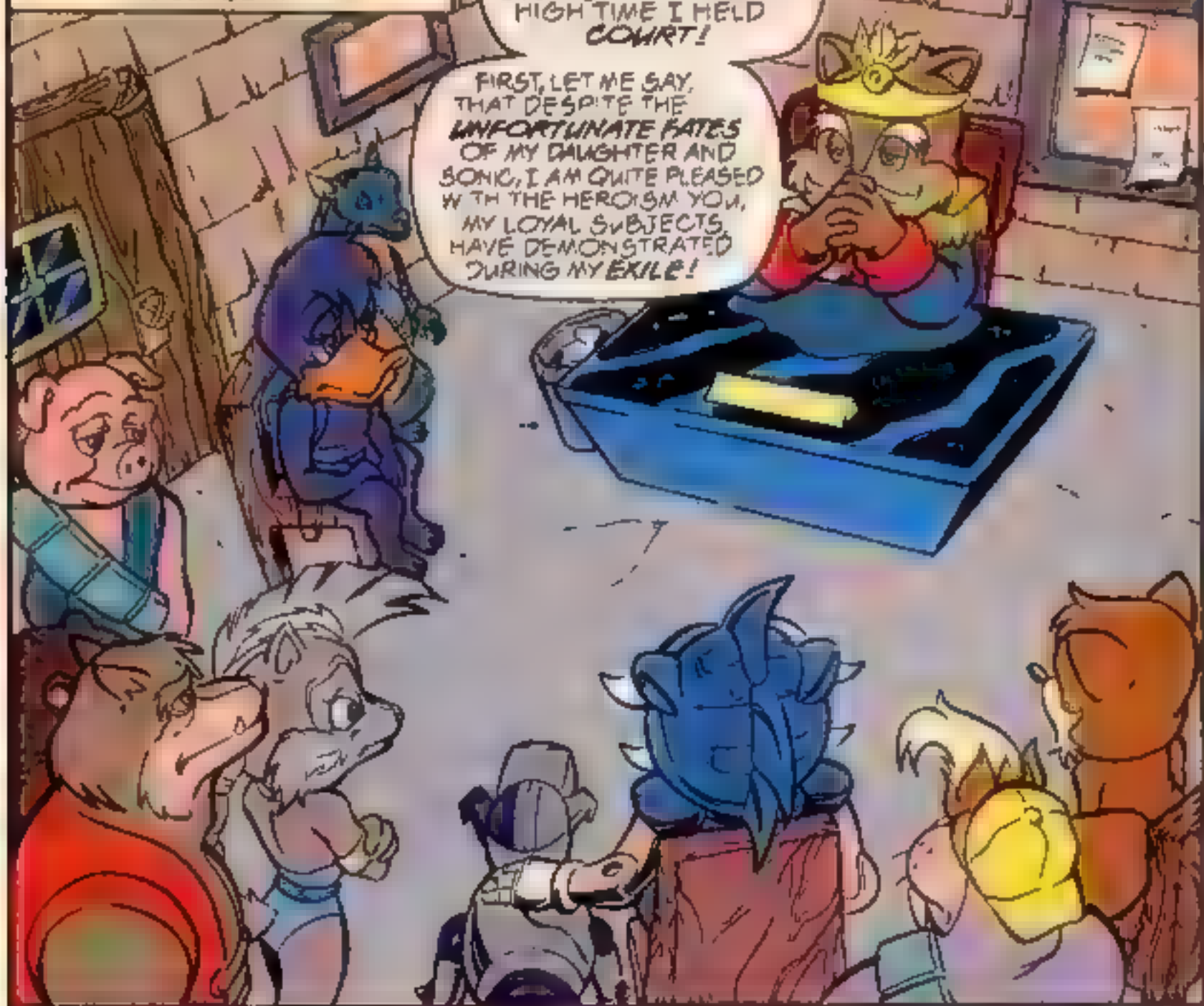




AS WE PONDER THE
FATE OF OUR COMBATANTS,
WE TAKE A POSSIBLE
LAST LOOK INSIDE KNOTHOLE
VILLAGE...

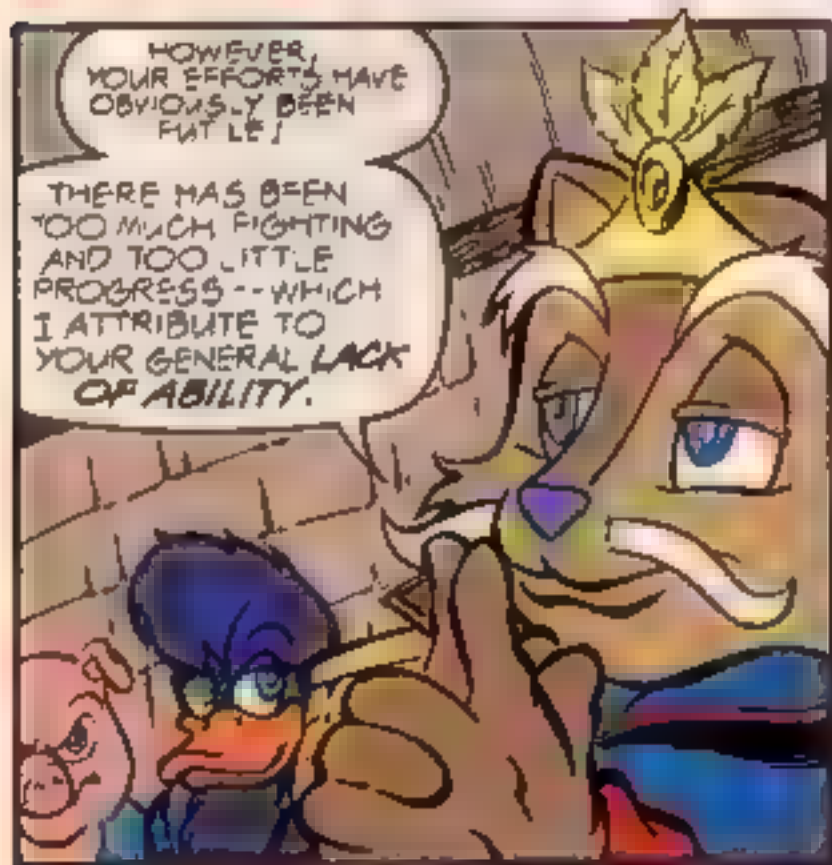
SINCE IT HAS BEEN
YEARS SINCE I LAST
DID SO, AND IN LIEU OF
ALL THE RECENT
EVENTS, I THOUGHT IT
HIGH TIME I HELD
COURT!

FIRST, LET ME SAY,
THAT DESPITE THE
UNFORTUNATE FATES
OF MY DAUGHTER AND
SON, I AM QUITE PLEASED
WITH THE HEROISM YOU,
MY LOYAL SUBJECTS,
HAVE DEMONSTRATED
DURING MY EXILE!



HOWEVER,
YOUR EFFORTS HAVE
OBVIOUSLY BEEN
FUTILE!

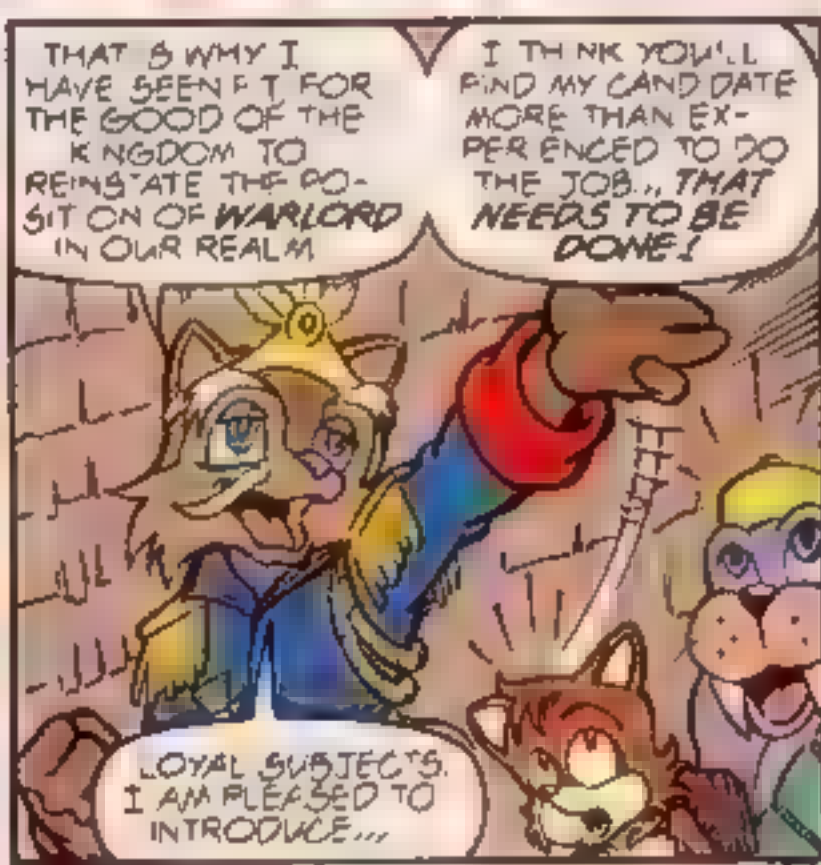
THERE HAS BEEN
TOO MUCH FIGHTING
AND TOO LITTLE
PROGRESS -- WHICH
I ATTRIBUTE TO
YOUR GENERAL LACK
OF ABILITY.

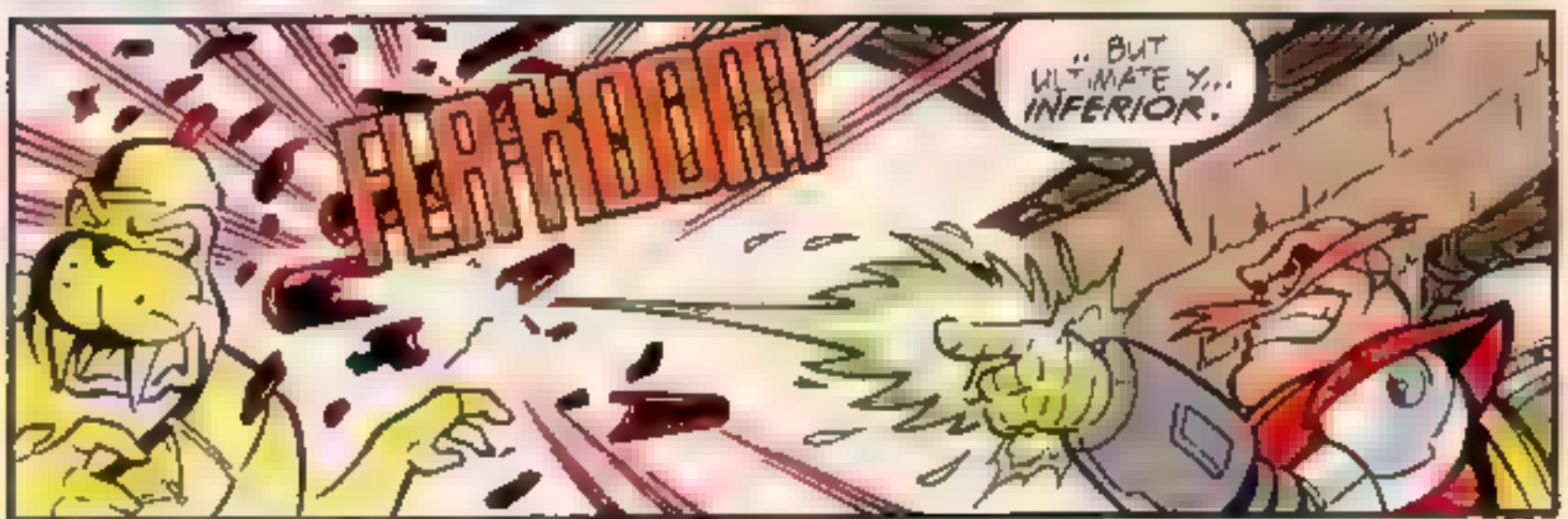
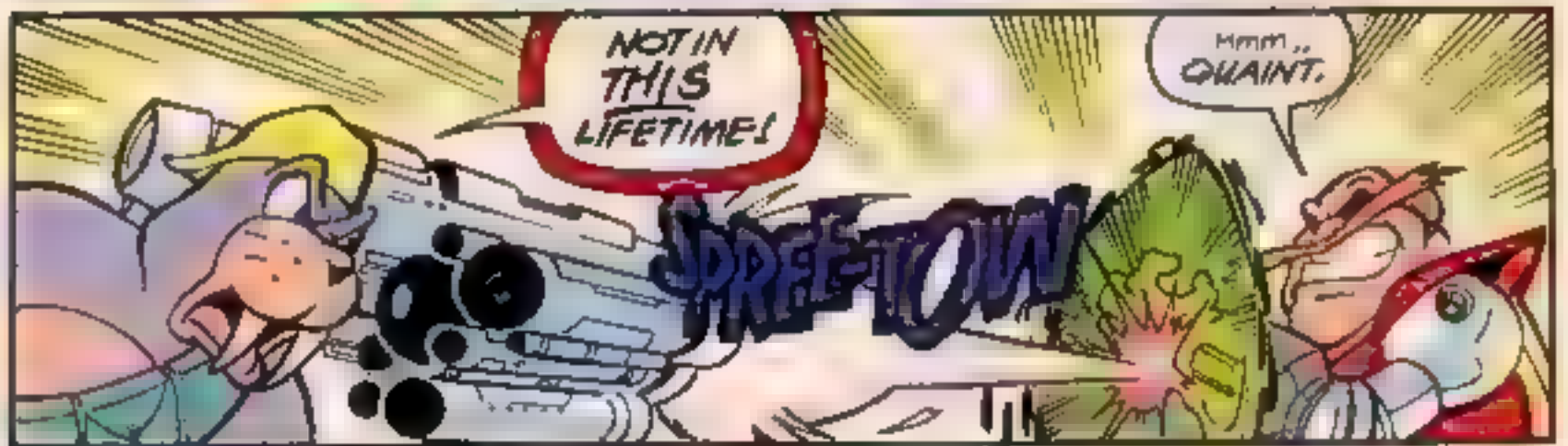


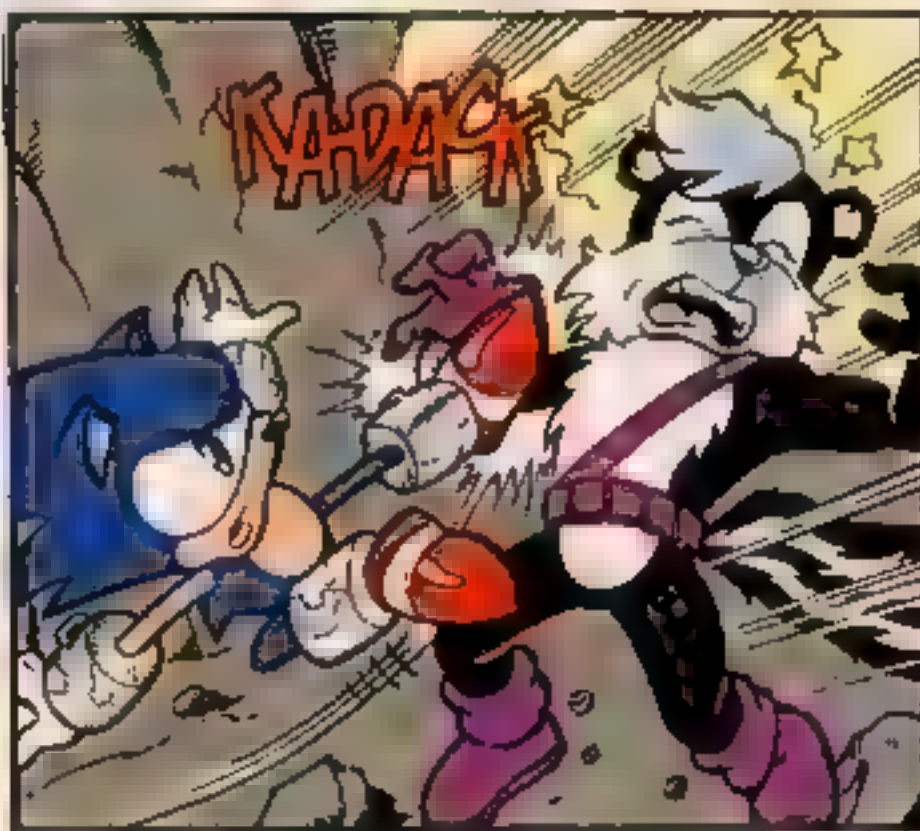
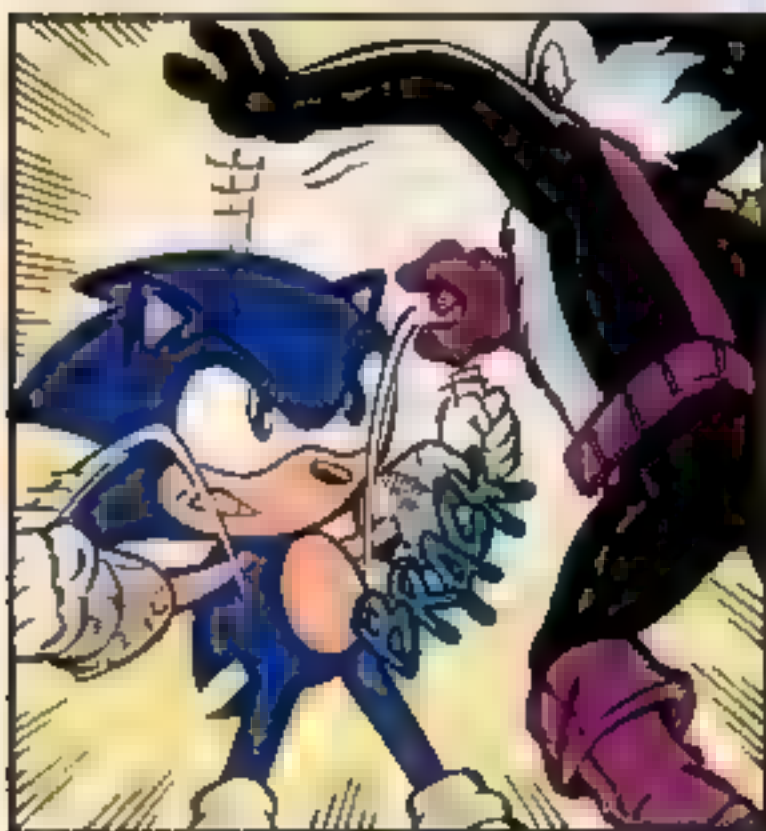
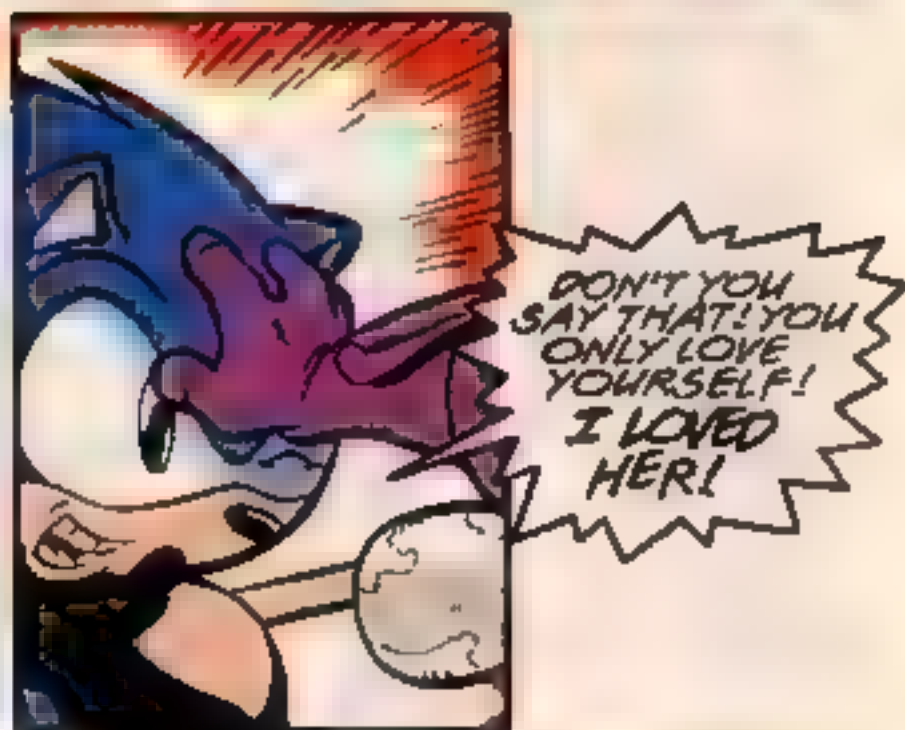
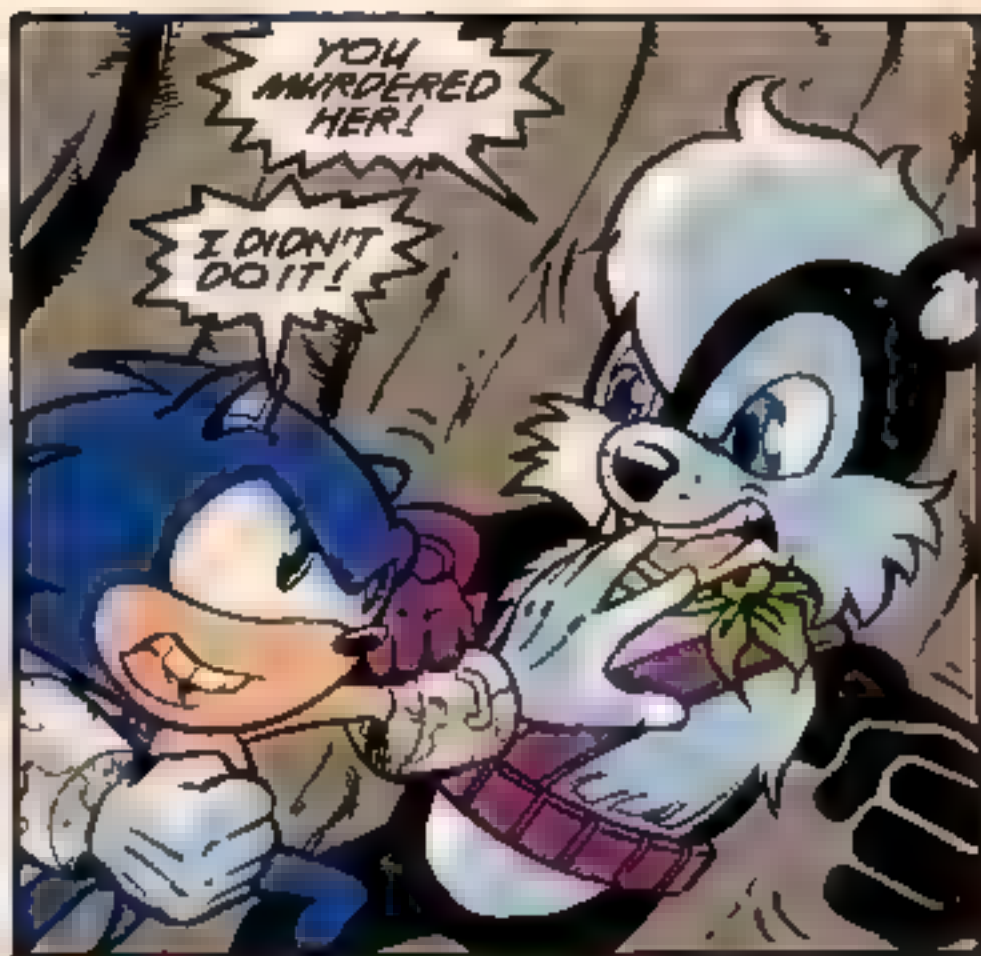
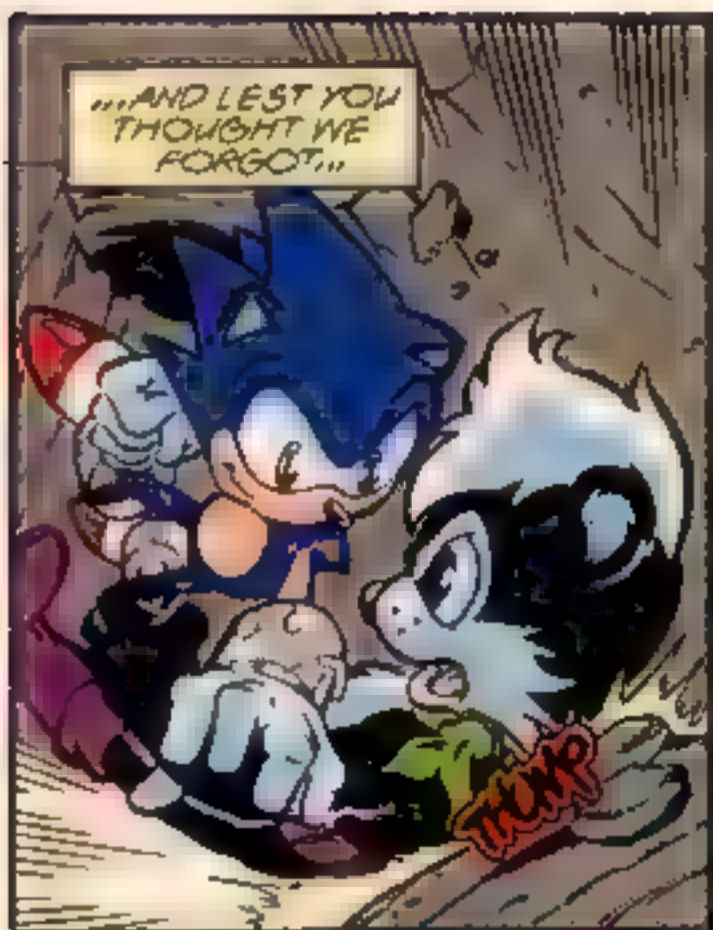
THAT IS WHY I
HAVE SENT FORT
FOR THE GOOD OF THE
KINGDOM TO
REINSTATE THE PO-
SITION OF WARLORD
IN OUR REALM

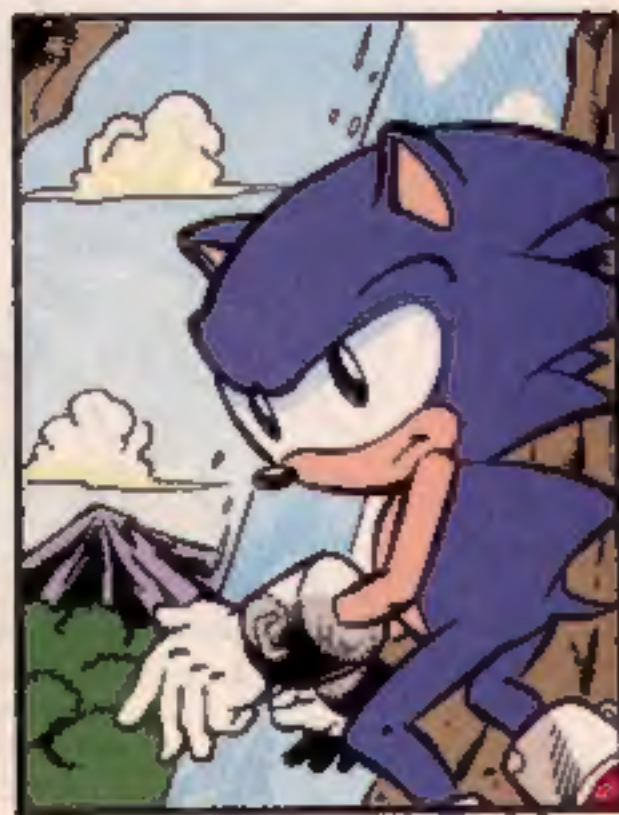
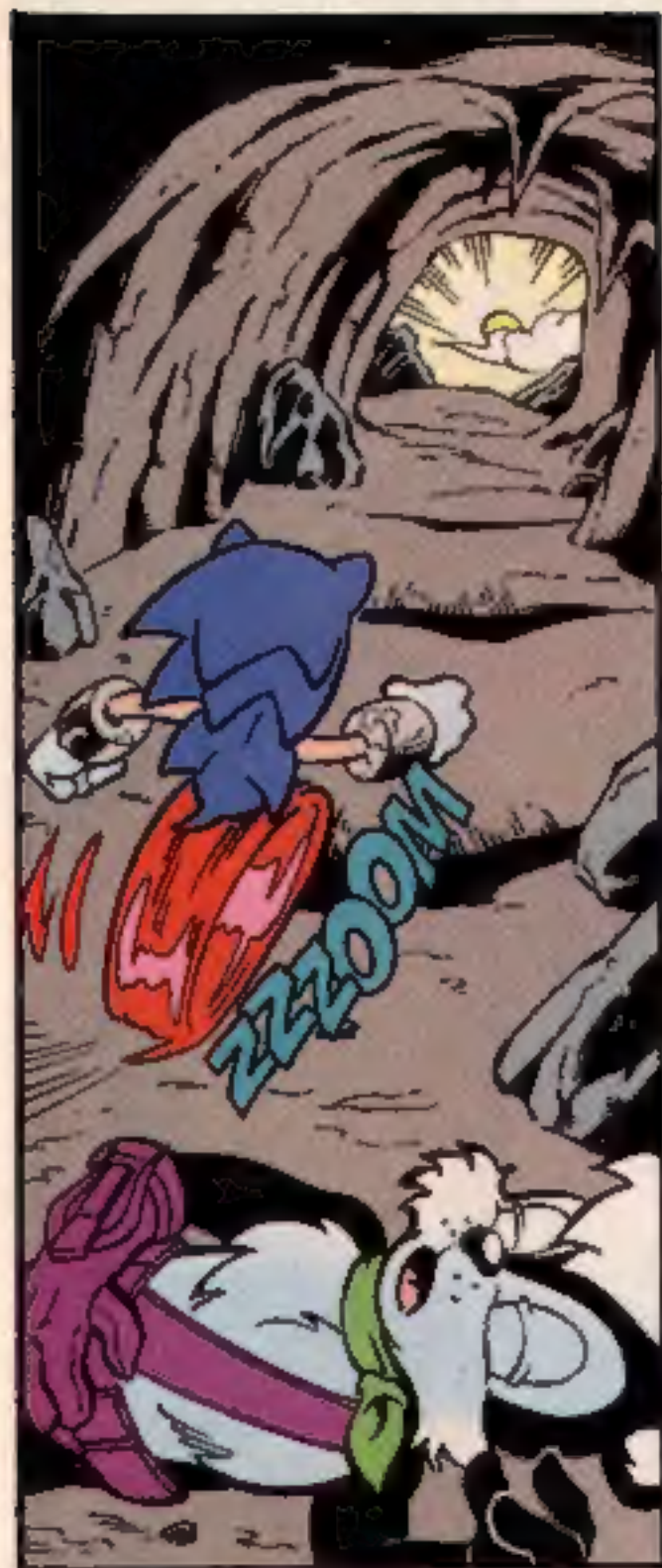
I THINK YOU'LL
FIND MY CANDIDATE
MORE THAN EX-
PERIENCED TO DO
THE JOB... THAT
NEEDS TO BE
DONE!

LOYAL SUBJECTS,
I AM PLEASED TO
INTRODUCE...











**TO BE
CONTINUED...**

SONIC
THE
REDCUTTING

Brought to you with pride by

script **KENT TAYLOR & KEN PENDERS** penciller **MANNY GALAN**
inker **PAM EKLUND** letterer **JEFF POWELL** colorist **KARL BOLLERS**
editor **J. FREDDY GABRIE** mang. editor **VICTOR GORELICK**
editor-in-chief **RICHARD GOLDWATER**

SONIC-GRAMS

J. Freddy Garcia
Editor

THIS JUST IN!

ROBOTNIK IN KNOTHOLE!!! SAY IT ISN'T SO, JOE.

Well it is! What will happen next is anybody's guess! All we can tell you about the continuation to "END GAME" next issue is that its called, "Escape To The Floating Island!" Written by Mike Gallagher and Ken Penders with art chores by newcomer Sam Maxwell and Pam Ekland! On sale early May 1997!

Also in three weeks, the upcoming 48-page special that takes place before the events in last month's issue that everyone is talking about! "KnucklesQuest" is over, but the saga of the Sword of Acorns is not. Mammoth Mogul and his Fearsome Foursome want it for their own purposes. Devising a plan that will keep Knuckles and The Chaotix from delivering the sword to Princess Sally and The Freedom Fighters, isn't that much of a problem when you know what their weaknesses are. Talk about a misunderstanding. It is a tale we could only call

"SONIC VS. KNUCKLES: BATTLE ROYAL!!!" Also on sale in early May 1997!

Because you, the fans, have demanded it: KNUCKLES: THE DARK LEGION three-issue mini-series has graduated to ongoing status! Beginning with Issue #4, KNUCKLES THE ECHIDNA will be on sale late May '97! Continuing in the tradition of the first three issues, every three-issue story-arc will have a triple-combo cover collection. More about this next month!

Fred

P.S.: As I mentioned last issue, due to the overwhelming amount of e-mail from Sonic fans all over the World Wide Web, Sonic now has an e-mail address devoted solely to "Notes From The Net!" It is SonicNotes@aol.com; please make a 'note' of it. Thanks!



SEND LETTERS TO:
SONIC-GRAMS #48
C/O ARCHIE COMIC PUBLICATIONS, INC.
P.O. BOX 419
MAMARONECK, NY 10543-0419
e-mail address: SonicNotes@aol.com

Because of limited space, the editors cannot guarantee that all correspondence will be published and reserve the right to edit messages as they see fit.

Dear Sonic,

I just finished reading issue #42 and let me tell you Mawhinney's art was stunning and Taylor's script, outstanding! Just one more thing: How did the Floating Island stay afloat if Knuckles lent the chaos emerald to Sonic? KnucklesQuest promises to be interesting. Sonic and Tails are my favorite duo, even though Tails is the biggest blabbermouth on Mobius. SONIC RULES!!!

Christian Ibrahim
N.S.W., Australia

to convince you guys, hold my breath till I turn bluer than Sonic?

Susan Hatfield
Dothan, AL

Hey, Susan! I was kind of afraid that "Aunt" Sally liked Knuckles more than Sonic. But now with everything that's going on, it doesn't seem to matter anymore—I just want things to be the way they were—I mean—without Robotnik, of course.

Dear Letter Quest, I thought SONICQUEST #1 was "Dr. Bomb." It's great! Now I know the next two books are going to be good. I've been a long-time subscriber of SONIC THE HEDGEHOG since I was twelve. I'm fifteen years old now and I'm in the 10th grade. I like playing Sega Genesis and LOVE JAPANESE ANIME!! I read about a new Japanese Sonic cartoon in Game Fan Magazine. It said that it could be rented right now. I'm still looking all over the city for it! Well, I've got to go. Keep up the good work!

Danielle Hardy
Detroit, MI

Hey, what's up, gang? It's me, Tails. Shhhh. I'm in hiding since Robotnik took over the village. What a bummer, huh? Since Sonic's not here, I'm doing letters this month. Bet'cha I do a better job than Antoine did last month. Anyway, I don't think I'm a blabbermouth, just full of information, that's all. Knuckles had a spare emerald that he got in the SUPER SONIC VS. HYPER KNUCKLES Special #1. That's what he brought with him, not the original that was still keeping the Island afloat.

Dear Sonic-Grabs,

I DON'T WANT KNUCKLES AND SALLY TO GET TOGETHER!!! Look, sure, I admit she's pretty, but she's already got four guys drooling over her and I DON'T LIKE IT!!! Don't get me wrong, Knuckles is a wonderful character in his own right, just not with Sally when everyone knows beyond a shadow of a doubt that Sonic is Sally's guy, period! What do I have to do

I'm glad you liked SONICQUEST, Danielle. It was a good learning experience for me to tag along with Sonic and learn on the job from the man himself. I still believe in him. I know that there's no way he could've hurt Sally. I agree with Uncle Chuck—I think Sonic is innocent. But how do I prove that with Butt-nik breathing down my neck. I wonder if there's a

connection between the two. I've got to think about this for a while...

NOTES FROM
THE NET

Hey Sonic,

I learned that another character from the animated series is coming to the comic book: Lupe and her Wolf Pack. After the experience in SONIC #39, MECHA MADNESS Special #1 and SONIC #40, I hope you learned an important lesson: "Be careful what you wish for, you might just get it!"

I have a question concerning Antoine: Will he still be your friend even after SONIC #40 or will he turn on you like Sleuth Dawggy Dawg did in #42? Who knows, he might end up serving Enerjak. Speaking of which, when is Enerjak making an appearance again. See you in END GAME!

Danny Wheeler
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Sonic didn't speak to Antoine for a while after that except when it came to business. After Antoine stood up for Sonic against Geoffrey St. John in SONIC #46, I thought they might be able to bury the hatchet—that is, until Antoine saw Sonic drop Sally. Hey, where is Antoine anyway? Come to think of it, I don't see Bunnie, either. Gotta go. See you next month.